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ARTES SCIENTIA VERITAS

Hamilton, Elizabeth

MEMOIRS

OF

MODERN PHILOSOPHERS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



"Ridiculum acri

"Fortius et melius magnas plerumque secat res."

HOR.



"Ridicule shall frequently prevail,

"And cut the knot, when graver reasons fail."

FRANCIS.



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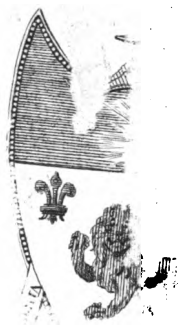
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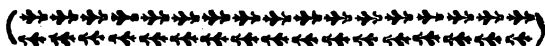
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CHAP. I.

"With too much thinking to have common thought."
POPE.

WHEN Bridgetina returned to the parlour, and found that Henry had departed without taking leave of her, she was beyond measure disconcerted. She had the day before received from Mr. Glib a new novel, the declamatory stile and quaint phraseology of which had so highly pleased her, that anxious to dress her thoughts on the present occasion to the very best advantage, she had retired to refresh her memory with a few of the most striking passages; she now returned fraught with three long speeches, so ardent, so expressive, so full of energy and emphasis, that it would have grieved a saint to have had them lost.

"And is he gone?" cried she, in a voice that at once denoted her surprise and mortification. "Was his sensibility too great to bear the sad—sad scene of separation? It was not his own feelings but mine, of which he was thus tender. Ah! the delightful excess of morbid sensibility!"

Julia, perceiving the astonishment of Mr. Gubbles, felt very much ashamed; and afraid lest Bridgetina should still further expose herself, begged her, in a whisper, to say no more upon the
subject

subject at present, as they should have an opportunity of talking it all over when they were alone.

"I know your meaning," replied Bridgetina aloud, "You would have me basely conceal my sentiments, in conformity to the pernicious maxims and practices of the world. But what so much as the dread of censure has cramped the energy of the female mind? Have not the first of female characters despised it? And do you think the odious fetters of a depraved society shall shackle me?"

'Indeed, Miss Botherim,' said Mr. Gubbles, "I must make bold to tell you, that if you mean, (for I cannot pretend to say that I very well understand you) but if you mean to say, that you intend to be above the censures of the world, I can assure you I never knew any good come of such notions.'

"What are the censures of the world to me?" said Bridgetina. "Do you think I have not sufficient philosophy to despise them?"

'Well, well,' returned Mr. Gubbles, 'I hope it will not be your case, Miss; but I must needs say, that in the long course of my practice, I never knew any one that began in despising the censures of the world, that did not conclude in deserving them.'

Mr. Gubbles then took his leave, and was no sooner gone, than Bridgetina informed Julia of her intention of following Henry to London. "Good heavens!" exclaimed Julia, "you cannot, surely, be so very imprudent as to harbour a design of this sort now? Think of the consequences to your character. Think of the distress of your mother! Nay, to Henry himself such a circumstance could not fail at present to be inconvenient and distressing to the last degree."

'To

‘To answer your objections methodically,’ said Bridgetina, ‘(for you know I love to methodize) they are, I think, threefold. First, with regard to my character; secondly, in respect to my mother; and thirdly, in respect to Henry himself. These are your objections; they may all, however, be answered in one word—*general utility*. What is the use of character to an individual, when put in competition with the interests of general utility? By what moral tie am I bound to consult the inclinations of my mother? The only just morals are those which tend to increase the bulk of enjoyment: my enjoyment can never be increased by living with my mother, consequently living with her is adverse to the grand end of existence—*general utility*. As to Henry, will not my presence increase his happiness? And is not happiness and pleasure the only true end of our being? When we attain these, do we not then best promote general utility? These are the sublime principles of philosophy, and all that opposes it is the fable of superstition.’

“But I am not convinced, that by following Henry to London, before he has had time to arrange his affairs, or even to enter upon the profession on which he depends for his support, that you will contribute either to his happiness or your own,” said Julia.

‘What obstinacy of prejudice!’ cried Bridgetina. ‘Was not melancholy painted upon his countenance? Was not his misery, at the thoughts of leaving me, evident to the most careless observer? And shall not his happiness at again beholding me be equally apparent? Yes; I feel in myself a capacity for encreasing his happiness, and my powers shall not be lost. Our souls shall

* See Emma Courtney.

mingle, our ideas shall expand together. Sensations! emotions! delicacies! sensibilities! O how shall ye overwhelm us in one great torrent of felicity!

"Still," said Julia, "I wish—indeed, my dear Bridgetina, I wish—that with regard to Henry, you may not labour under some mistake. Forgive me, but I think it would be wrong to conceal from you, that I have still some doubts—"

'Doubts! after what you have heard him say?' cried Bridgetina, interrupting her. 'Was ever declaration more explicit? Was ever confession more sweetly candid or sincere?'

"He did indeed confess that he was in love with somebody," returned Julia; "but as he spoke in the first person, the object of his passion might, I think, be with greater probability supposed absent than present."

The rage of Bridgetina, at a supposition so injurious to her wishes, and so destructive of her hopes, was for some time too great for utterance. She at length, however, gave vent to her wrath, and loaded poor Julia with the bitterest reproaches, mixed with many sarcastic observations on her want of penetration. Julia was at great pains to appease her, in which she at length happily succeeded; and though she could by no means prevail upon her to relinquish the plan of following Henry to London, she extorted from her a promise of delay.

Bridgetina then entered into a very long, and doubtless a very instructive, investigation of the nature of mind; proving, by a thousand irrefragable arguments, the utter impossibility of Henry's having continued insensible to the charms of her mental qualifications; and concluded her oration by an observation so full of novelty and wisdom,
that

that it alone were sufficient to immortalize her name. 'Having proved,' said she, 'that mind is superior to matter, and never more superior than when the faculties are in the full vigour of youth; it necessarily follows, that were man, uncorrupted by the prejudices of society, to act from the pure impulse of nature, he would, in the wild career of energetic youth, despise the trifling disadvantages of ugliness and decrepitude. Regardless of the mere forms of matter, he would leave the unnatural admiration of beauty to the old, the dull, and the insensible; and seek for the object of his affection a discussing, a reasoning, an investigating mind. This is the true course of nature! This is the most sublime proof of the perfectibility of man!'

CHAP. II.

"Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
 "Whether he thinks too little or too much;
 "Chaos of thought and passion, all confus'd,
 "Still by himself abus'd, or disabus'd."

POPE.

JULIA was now so far recovered, as to be able to walk across the room with very little help. She could sit up the whole day, without experiencing any inconvenience; and, certain that she could well bear the motion of a carriage, she would no longer have delayed her removal to her father's house, had it not been for the earnest intreaties of Vallaton.

A 4

She

She asked him, with a smile, if any thing was to prevent his seeing her there as frequently as he did in her present situation? "Alas!" returned Vallaton, "I may, indeed, have there the pleasure of beholding you, of hearing the music of your voice; but can I pour out my soul to you in the presence of your father, as I do now in this blessed retirement? Ah! dearest Julia, do not so soon deprive me of the exquisite happiness I have of late enjoyed. If you have any regard for me, you will not hesitate to prolong the period of my felicity."

Julia, who was herself too happy in the uninterrupted enjoyment of her lover's conversation to be very solicitous of change, consented to remain for some days longer. Meantime the sky brightened up, the sun again shone forth, the floods abated, and Vallaton on his next visit brought such an account of the dryness of the road, as induced Bridgetina, who was all impatience to learn some tidings of the young physician, to propose walking to her mother's, leaving Vallaton *tête à tête* with Julia, till her return. Her proposal met with no opposition from either of the parties, and she immediately set out.

By incessantly ruminating on her own situation, she had worked her mind into a state of effervescence, whose airy fumes so completely filled the light balloon of fancy, that judgment and common-sense (like the adventurous brothers* of aerostatic memory) suffered themselves to be carried along by its wild career.

Full of distinguishing herself by some bold step that should immortalize her fame, she walked on

with

* Stephen and Joseph Montgolfier.

with precipitation, unheedful of every object, careless of every observer ; sometimes stopping to make a soliloquy, sometimes trotting along as fast as the shortness of her legs would permit ; till, when about half-way to the town, she was stopped by Mrs. Delmond, who was thus far on her road to visit Julia. Mrs. Delmond was surprised by seeing her, and immediately enquired for her daughter. Bridgetina only staved to say that she would find Julia very well ; and then, careless of Mrs. Delmond's intreaties that she would be so good as to take up her gown, which trailed after her upon the dirty road, she set off with redoubled speed.

A few steps from her mother's door she was met by Mr. Glib. " How d'ye do, citizen, Miss ? " cried he, as soon as he observed her. " Exerting your energies, I see. That's it ! energies do all. Make your legs grow long in a twinkling. Won't then sweep streets with your gown. All owing to this d****d good-for-nothing state of civilization. No short legs in an enlightened society. All the Hottentots tall and strait as May-poles."

" Certainly," said Bridgetina, bridling, " if a person of energetic mind chooses to be tall, there is nothing to hinder it ; mind, we all know, being despotic over matter ; but I see no good in being tall, for my share, and would much rather remain as I am."

" As you are, Miss ? " cried Glib, grinning. " No, no ; change your mind, when you get among the Gonoquais. Grand scheme goes bravely on. Four new philosophers agreed to go already. Nothing at our house but preparation. Shut up shop to-morrow. Ship to be freighted soon. Only want the cash. Philosophers

phers all sadly out at elbows. Depend on you for five hundred."

'Yes,' replied Bridgetina, 'and I hope to bring an acquisition to the party of more real value than fifty times five hundred.'" She had now reached her mother's door, but finding her not at home, she proceeded without delay to the house of Mr. Sydney.

Maria was at home, and alone; her spirits dejected by parting with her brother, who had ever been the object of her fondest affection—an affection now increased by the stronger ties of tender friendship, unbounded confidence, and exalted esteem. She would willingly have been excused from the painful task of talking on common topics with such visitors as chance might send her, at a time when her full heart was occupied by its own feelings; but as she had early learned too great a respect for truth to command a domestic to commit a breach of it, she did not assume the privilege of being denied. Nor did she, like some pretenders to sanctity, make amends to herself for the self-denial practised in one instance, by the indulgence of peevishness or ill-humour in another; but repressing her mortification at being thus unseasonably disturbed, she received our heroine, if not with the dissembled smile of pleasure, with the urbanity of real hospitality.

Bridgetina instantly enquired for Henry. When she heard that he had set off early in the morning, she burst into an exclamation of sorrow. "And is he gone?" cried she. "Gone, without one tender adieu? Cruel Henry! why didst thou thus leave me? why deny me the delicious agony of a parting embrace? But thy feelings were too much awakened! thy manly soul struggled with the

the suffocating sensations of sorrowing sensibility ! Tell me, Maria ! tell me, I conjure you, every word he said. Did he not murmur at his cruel fate ? did he not sigh ? did he not appear extremely wretched ?”

‘ If you mean my brother,’ said Maria, ‘ it cannot be doubted that he was very sorry to part with us. He has too much feeling to leave his friends with indifference.’

“ Feeling !” cried Bridgetina, “ Oh, he is all feeling, all sensibility, and softness, and interesting melancholy. But grieve not for him, Maria ; soon shall I soothe his sorrows with the tender assiduity of unsophisticated and affective love ; soon will I clasp him to my throbbing bosom ; soon —”

‘ Indeed, Miss Botherim,’ said Maria, ‘ you talk very wildly. I suppose you mean to rally me for my dejection ; but indeed, this is not the way to increase my spirits.’

“ Has your brother then not told you of our loves ?”

‘ Why, my dear Miss Botherim, will you persist in this absurd way of speaking ? Indeed it is not kind ; my spirits are by no means equal to it.’

“ Why will you persist,” returned Bridgetina, “ in believing me not to be serious ? Never was I more so, I do assure you, in my life. Henry was wrong in concealing from you his long and tender attachment ; but since upon the formation of our first attachment depends the colour of our future life, happy may you be that existing circumstances led him to such an object. Yes, Maria, rejoice that your brother loves one who glories in returning his tenderness ; who, with inexpressible yearnings, pants to convince him

him of the power he has obtained over her heart."

'For heaven's sake,' cried Maria, 'to what do you allude? To whom is my brother thus attached? How did you come by his confidence?'

"To whom is your brother attached?" repeated Bridgetina; "to whom should he possibly be attached, but to me? Yes; long the fierce consuming fire has flamed in secret; nor till yesterday morning did it get vent in the dear interesting channel of a full explanation. Oh, Maria, how did our souls then mingle! how delicious was the sympathetic tenderness that heaved our throbbing hearts!"

Amazed, yet doubting, Maria stared upon Bridgetina; at length, recovering herself, 'I see, Miss Botherim,' said she gravely, 'you have a mind to amuse yourself by an experiment upon my credulity; but I am not so easily deceived. Believe me, we have had enough of this foolish conversation, and had better change the subject.'

Bridgetina, much offended at a speech which insinuated a doubt of her being the object of Henry's affection, retorted with some warmth; and by a minute detail of the conversation that had taken place the preceding day, laboured to enforce the conviction, while she increased the astonishment of his sister.

In repeating what had been said by Henry, Bridgetina followed the method observed by many worthy people, who, from a benevolent desire of making whatever they recount appear to the best advantage, take the trouble of translating every sentence into their own language, and thus kindly bestow upon their friends their own peculiar turn of expression. So effectually, in the present instance, did Bridgetina pursue this admirable

mirable plan, that she made the declaration of Henry appear, even to the prejudiced mind of his sister, as full and unequivocal as it had done to her own. Every word she uttered filled the breast of Maria with an increasing portion of astonishment and dismay.

That Henry, the brother in whom her hopes were fondly centered; he, to whom, in her opinion, belonged all excellence and perfection; whose sentiments were so delicate, whose observation was so penetrating; that *he* should make choice of such a woman as Miss Botherim! It was equal subject of mortification and amazement! Yet when she considered the evident perturbation of his mind, when she recollected how anxiously he had sought for an opportunity of speaking to her unobserved by their father, which many little cross accidents had interposed to prevent; and that he had been forced to depart without an opportunity of communicating to her what seemed to hang so heavy on his mind; the recollection seemed to confirm the truth of the extraordinary tale. Bridgetina proceeded to mention her intention of immediately following Henry to London, and taking out her tablet, desired his address.

"Impossible!" cried Maria, reddening with vexation; "It is impossible you can be so ridiculous as to harbour a thought of following my brother to London."

"I not only think of it," returned Bridgetina, "but am determined upon going. You, my dear, who are the child of prejudice and superstition, would, perhaps, startle at the idea of following a lover. You have not strength of mind to devote yourself to that *moral martyrdom* which every female, who enters upon the grand path of true philosophy,

philosophy, must, in this depraved and corrupt state of civilization, be certain to encounter.'

"Indeed, indeed, Miss Botherim, these fine theories do very well to talk about," returned Maria; "but believe me, they were never meant for practice. Think but for a moment on the consequences that must ensue both to yourself and my brother, from persisting in a project so wild—so ridiculous. And I am sure you have too much sense to proceed any farther in a scheme that must bring ruin to you both."

'My scheme,' said Bridgetina, 'is too extensive for any but a mind of great powers to comprehend. It is not bounded by the narrow limits of individual happiness, but extends to embrace the grand object of general utility. Your education has been too confined to enable you to follow an energetic mind in which passions generate powers, and powers generate passions; and powers, passions, and energies, germinate to general usefulness. I see you do not understand this; it is, indeed, beyond the comprehension of a vulgar mind; but when I have more leisure I shall be happy to enter with you into an investigation of the subject. As I know the address of Mrs. Fielding, it is of little consequence whether I have your brother's or not; so good-bye!'

"Do not go, I beseech you," cried Maria, "do not go, dear Miss Botherim, till I talk to you a little further upon this subject. You would not, sure you would not wish to injure the interests of my brother, whose principal dependence is on the friendship of Mrs. Fielding. What would she think of seeing a lady come after him to London? What could she think, that would not be injurious to the honour and character of both?"

'If

‘If she be a person of such vulgar prejudices, her opinion is of little consequence,’ answered Bridgetina. ‘But make yourself easy, Maria, I have for Henry a scheme of happiness in view, which will make the friendship of Mrs. Fielding very immaterial.’ So saying, Bridgetina hurried away without listening to any further expostulation, leaving poor Maria a prey to the most harassing perplexity and vexation.

Greatly she now regretted the absence of her father, who had gone to pay a visit to a gentleman in the country, in order to procure from him an introduction to his numerous connections in London in favour of Henry; and as this gentleman’s house was ten miles distant from W —, she thought it probable he might not return till the following day. Upon this emergency, she determined to consult her friend Miss Orwell; and if she found that Bridgetina still persisted in her extraordinary plan, resolved to apply to Dr. Orwell himself for his interference; as his voice, she thought, would be effectual for its prevention.

She instantly hurried to the parsonage, where she found Harriet busily employed in preparing baby-linen for the wife of a poor labourer who had that morning been brought to-bed of twins, and was altogether unprovided for this double demand upon her tiny wardrobe. The other children, whose noisy prattle disturbed the mother’s repose, Harriet had brought home with her in the morning, and found their company very efficacious in driving away the troublesome companion—*thought*.

She dismissed her little guests on the entrance of Maria, whose countenance betrayed such symptoms

symptoms of agitation, that it struck dismay to her inmost soul. She took Maria's hand, and with faltering voice, enquired if any thing had befallen her. "Has your brother—has any accident—Oh! for heaven's sake, speak."

"My brother, I hope, is well," returned Maria; "but he has lost himself—has thrown himself away—has—Oh! Harriet, how shall I tell you?—he has engaged himself to Miss Botherim."

"To Miss Botherim!" repeated Harriet, staring wildly upon Maria, whose feelings were now so overcome, that she could no longer refrain from tears, but throwing her arms round her lovely friend, for some time wept in silence on her neck. Harriet, stupified by the information she had received, made no attempt to interrupt her. Yet though tears are sometimes it is said infectious, not one found its way to the eyes of Harriet. She neither moved nor spake, till Maria, her voice half choaked in sobs, exclaimed, O Harriet! the sister of my heart, how often have I flattered myself that you, you were the object of my brother's love. You, indeed, were formed to make him happy—but Miss Botherim! O what forcery has bewitched him?"

Whether it was the extreme tenderness of Maria's accent, as she pronounced these words, that touched some unison in Harriet's heart, or whether it was the words themselves that struck the chords of feeling, we know not; but they produced upon Harriet the instantaneous effect of sympathy. She strained Maria to her bosom, and mingled her tears with hers. After the first emotions of both had a little subsided, Maria proceeded fully to relate what she had learned from Miss Botherim, and by her relation, excited in

Harriet

Harriet feelings still more poignant than those she had herself experienced.

Harriet had indeed still more reason for astonishment : for though Henry had never talked to her of love, he had, by a long series of minute and delicate attentions, given her such unequivocal proofs of his partiality, that she could as soon have entertained doubts of her own existence as of the sincerity of his affection. As Maria proceeded in her narration, a thousand recollected proofs of tenderness rushed upon her mind. She remembered, too, how uneasy he had ever appeared in the presence of Miss Botherim, for whom he seemed to entertain an unconquerable dislike. Could this be affectation ? Could it be a mask to conceal his real sentiments from observation ? In any other instance Harriet would not have hesitated to have pronounced a firm negative to those unworthy suspicions. But where is the judgment which, under the influence of passion, can coolly exercise its undiminished powers ? Where the candour that jealousy cannot bias ? Where the firmness that suspicion cannot shake ?

- " Such tricks hath strong imagination,
- " That if he would but apprehend some joy,
- " It comprehends some tringer of that joy ;
- " Or in the night imagining some fear.
- " How easy is a bush suppoled a bear ? •

The entrance of Dr. Orwell and Marianne, put a stop to conversation, and restored to Harriet the liberty of ruminating in silence on the strange event, which, in spite of all she had heard, she scarcely knew how to believe.

The Doctor spoke to Miss Sidney of her brother,

• Shakespeare.

ther, in whose welfare he took the most sincere and friendly interest. He talked of his journey, of his prospects, of the probability of his success in the capital; and mingled all he said respecting him with such discriminating, yet ardent praise, as would at any other time have kindled the flame of gratitude in the breasts of more than one of his auditors. In the midst of his panegyric, a loud knock at the door announcing the approach of a visitor, Maria, who was in no spirits for seeing company, would have retired; but before she could get away, Mrs. Botherim hastily entered the room.

Breathless, pale, and trembling, the poor old lady sunk into the chair that was offered her, and hiding her face with the corner of her cloak, she burst into a flood of tears. The sight of age, venerable in itself, is doubly venerable in affliction. The hearts of these amiable young people bowed before it; and each, forgetful of her own particular sorrow, turned her whole attention towards those of the unhappy mother, the cause of whose distress they were at no loss to conjecture.

“Oh! Dr. Orwell,” cried she, taking out her handkerchief to wipe away her tears; “you know what it is to be a parent, and will not wonder at what I feel, when I tell you that I have lost my child! Yes, she leaves me! she deserts me! In my old age she forsakes me! She will make my grey hairs go with sorrow to the grave!”

‘Miss Botherim about to leave you!’ said Dr. Orwell in astonishment, ‘where is she going? Does she leave you for a husband? If so, you know, my dear madam, it is what parents must lay their accounts with.’

“Oh! it is no such thing as for a husband,” returned Mrs. Botherim; it is for madness, for ruin,

ruin, for misery! She says as how that young Dr. Sydney and she are going to live among the Hottentots. And Mr. Glib is going, and all them there philosophers are going. And this is what at last comes of all her fine larning, and all her argufications out of them there wise books. To run from her poor mother, and to go a harloting among the Hottentots! Oh! that I should ever live to see it!"

Much as Dr. Orwell was affected by the good lady's distress, at the mention of the Hottentots, he could not help smiling. A scheme so wild was, he thought, in no danger of being put in practice. 'Into what absurdities Mr. Glib or his friends may be led, I know not,' said he; 'but I think I can answer for Dr. Sydney, that his principles are built upon a rock, that gives security for the steadiness of his integrity and discretion.'

"Oh, you know nothing of him at all," returned Mrs. Botherim. "Who would have thought that he had been all this time slyly a courting o' my daughter, and 'ticing her to follow him to London, with no other view but to make her his concubine? For she told me to my face they were to live together without being married. Think of this, Dr. Orwell! think what a blow it is to my heart! oh, I shall never survive it."

'Depend upon it, Mrs. Botherim, there is some mistake in this,' rejoined the Doctor. 'That Doctor Sydney should take a fancy to Miss Botherim, as there is no accounting for tastes, is not impossible; but that he should be guilty of the arts of base seduction is so inconsistent with the whole tenor of his conduct, with the manly generosity of his sentiments, with the soundness of his principles, that it is utterly incredible. The best of men, it is true, act not at all times with consistency. By the impulse of sudden passion,

passion, all are liable to be sometimes betrayed; but the transient erratic wanderings of a noble mind never reach the confines of baseness. The man who entertains exalted conceptions of the Being to whom he believes himself accountable, is not likely to lose the transcript of his image on his heart, by an act of deliberate perfidy and wickedness. Henry Sydney, I repeat it, is incapable of being the seducer of innocence."

Harriet grasped her father's hand; tears of gratitude and pleasure glistened in her eyes. Her looks spoke more than words could have conveyed, and her approbation of his opinion was by no means indifferent to Dr. Orwell, who knew the generous warmth of her feelings, and highly esteemed the soundness of her judgment.

"How greatly is my brother honoured by your esteem, sir," said Maria, with great emotion; "but indeed you do not think more highly of him than he deserves."

"I know not what he deserves," cried Mrs. Botherim; "no, not I. If he takes away my daughter, he deserves every thing that's bad; and I should not have thought that any body would have given countenance to such doings. My poor Biddy! little did I think what all her larning was to come to! Seeing my late dear Mr. Botherim consider me as nobody, because I was not book-read, I thought I would take care to prevent my daughter's meeting with such disrespect from her husband; and so I encouraged her in doing nothing but reading from morning till night. Proud was I when they told me she was a philosopher; for few women, you know, are philosophers; and so I thought she must surely be wiser than all her sex, and that all the men of sense would be so fond of her! And to be sure she was fit to talk

talk with e'er a judge or an archbishop in the kingdom; and often have I thought, that if some of them great wise men had but heard her—'

"If your daughter has gained the affections of such a man as Henry Sydney," said Dr. Orwell, interrupting her, "you have nothing to regret. In a son-in-law so superior in talents, so unexceptionable in character, any reasonable parent may rejoice."

'I don't say any thing to disparage the young gentleman,' returned Mrs. Botherim; 'no, not I. And though I cannot say that I should much have liked her marrying a dissenter, (seeing that the late dear Mr. Botherim hated the very name o'em) yet I might have been brought to give my consent to their lawful marriage, had he courted her for that purpose; but to think of his 'ticing her to leave her mother's house, without being married at all! I wonder how you can have the conscience to take his part; it is not like a man of your cloth, Doctor; and what I should never have believed of you.'

The Doctor explained, and justified his opinion of young Sydney by many striking instances of noble and virtuous conduct, altogether incompatible with the crime alleged against him, and of which, for these reasons, he persisted in believing him incapable.

'Ah!' cried Mrs. Botherim, shaking her head, 'you don't know what them there presbyterians are capable of. The late dear Mr. Botherim used to say as how they were all as cunning and deceitful as Satan himself; and not one of them would he so much as speak to; no, nor give a farthing to one of their beggars, though in ever so much need of it, because it was encouraging a schism in the church; but the honour of the church was
indeed

indeed ever next his heart. Poor dear gentleman! hard would it have been upon him, had he but known that he was to fall from his horse at a dissenter's door, and breathe his last in a dissenter's house!

"And can there, my dear madam, be any stronger argument against the entertainment of such unchristian prejudices, than that which you have now adduced. The behaviour of Mr. Sydney, upon the unhappy occasion you have mentioned, evinced him to be a true disciple of the meek and forgiving JESUS; and from such let not the vile partition of sect or party separate our hearts. The truly religious, the truly good, are children of one family, by whatever names they may be distinguished. They ought, therefore, to love as brethren, to be united in affection; and, instead of harbouring the spirit of animosity, to *bind fast the bond of peace*. But where is Miss Botherim? I should like to have a little conversation with her, and perhaps may be able from it to procure you satisfaction."

"It was just for that, that I came," replied Mrs. Botherim. "I wish you to come and speak to her, and try if you can make her listen to reason; for she minds me no more than nothing at all. I may speak, and speak my heart out, all to no purpose; she dumb-founds me in such a way, by talking out of them there wise books, that I know not how to answer her. But you can speak in print like herself. Do, then, good Doctor, come with me, and try to persuade her past this vile notion of going to see them there Hottentots; and if she will have Dr. Sydney, let her be but honestly married, and I won't contradict her. Indeed, I never contradicted her in my life: she knows I did not, and it a'nt time to begin now.

Dr.

Dr. Orwell very readily agreed immediately to try the force of his arguments upon Bridgetina, and set out with Mrs. Botherim for her house, entertaining no doubt of his success.

CHAP. III.

" Assaying by his dev'lish arts to reach
 " The organs of her fancy — Thence raise
 " At least distemper'd, discontented thoughts,
 " Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
 " Blown up with high conceits, ingend'ring pride."

MILTON.

GREATLY to Mrs. Botherim's delight, and not a little to the satisfaction of Dr. Orwell, did they learn, from the servant who opened Mrs. Botherim's door, that Miss, fearful of being too late upon the road, had set out on her return to Miss Delmond. The Doctor had an easy task in convincing the fond mother, that her fears for the misconduct of her daughter were founded in mistake; and having soothed and quieted her mind, by his mild and ever-instructive conversation, he returned to his own house.

Bridgetina, mean time, inflamed by the opposition she had met with from her mother, and alarmed by a hint, that had dropt from her in the heat of argument, of detaining her by force, if reason could not prevail upon her to give up her extraordinary plan, resolved not to lose a moment's time in carrying it into effect. Instead of returning to Julia, she went directly to the house

house of Mr. Glib, from which she could take the stage-coach the following morning ; and having declared her intention to the philosophers, whom she found assembled in the back parlour, intreated their secrecy and assistance.

Her resolution was applauded by Mr. Glib in terms of high encomium. ‘What! hast left old Poke-about for good and all?’ cried he, rubbing his hands with an air of infinite satisfaction. ‘Now that is something excellent, indeed. Live with no one one does not like. Love no one but for what is in them. That’s it! that’s the way to perfectibility! What is it but loving one’s own child, or one’s own mother, or one’s own wife, better than other people’s, that obstructs the progress of morals? Leave them all. Let them all shift for themselves. Make them exert their energies. That’s it! Bring on the age of reason in a twinkling. Warrant though, the old lady take on at a great rate. Poor soul! knows nothing of philosophy. What is she then good for?’

“Mrs. Botherim, indeed,” said Mr. Myope, “has a mind of such limited powers, that she cannot be expected to do much towards general utility; and she has certainly no right to deprive the world of the vast advantages of Miss Botherim’s conversation and example; which, nevertheless, must have been in a great measure lost to society, if she had continued to live immured in her house. When such talents as hers are exerted in a wider field, and have the advantage of a happier soil and purer air, who can say how far they may extend, or what distant regions may not be meliorated by their fruits? To the event of Miss Botherim’s leaving her mamma, may the future Mandarins of China be indebted for their knowledge; and Tartars and Otaheitans, yet unborn, may from it experience, through channels

channels that will never be discovered, an incitement to their virtue."

Bridgetina had too much philanthropy in her nature, not to rejoice in the prospect of being so extensively useful; and pleased with the approbation of minds so congenial, she regarded herself with even more than usual complacency. Having procured a messenger from Mr. Glib's, she dispatched a short note to Julia, informing her "that the urgency of her affairs permitted her not to return to her again, but that she should hear from her as soon as she reached London; and in the mean time begged to have her things from the farm; which, as her mother had sent her three times more than there was the least occasion for, would serve her for some time after she went to town. Hoping that Julia would soon follow her example, she concluded with wishes for her happiness."

The situation of Julia, at the time this note arrived, was by no means an enviable one. The reader will recollect, that we left Mrs. Delmond on the road to the farm, where she soon after arrived. Her voice was heard by Julia, enquiring for her of the farmer, who was clipping the straggling plumage of a yew-tree peacock that grew before her window.

"Hush!" said Julia, (withdrawing her hand from Mr. Vallaton, and gently tapping his shoulder, while her eyes were lighted up with an arch and charming smile) "Here comes my mother, to whom you, I suppose, are quite a stranger."

"Had I not better make my escape?" cried Vallaton.

"Certainly," returned Julia, still smiling ironically; "she must be *vastly* surprised at seeing

you here. But as you must now inevitably meet her, you may as well sit still."

"I wish," cried Vallaton, greatly disordered, "I wish I could get off."

"Now, indeed," said Julia, "this is carrying the jest too far." Here Mrs. Delmond entered, and Julia, with a look of infinite satisfaction, rose to receive her. "I can now," said she, holding out her hands, "I can now, you see, receive my dear mamma with proper respect. I cannot yet, indeed, make a handsome curtesy, but Mr. Vallaton here shall make a bow for me; for which I shall bye and bye make him two curtesies in return. What say you to the bargain?"

Vallaton, who, on the entrance of Mrs. Delmond, had made a hasty retreat from the side of Julia to a chair at the further end of the room, made a stiff and formal bow. Mrs. Delmond, with an air still more stiff and embarrassed, coldly returned his salute.—So seldom were the impressions made upon the mind of this sweet lady strong enough to form an index of her countenance, that Julia was thunderstruck on observing displeasure and surprise to be now written upon it in the most legible characters. She took the seat which Vallaton had lately occupied, and remained for a few moments silent. Mortified and perplexed by a behaviour which to her was wholly unaccountable, Julia hesitated on what subject to address her; but longer silence being utterly insupportable, she at length asked, whether she had met Miss Botherim?

"Yes;" returned Mrs. Delmond. Another pause ensued.

"I hope she will come back to tea;" said Julia. "Did he not tell us that she would?" looking to Vallaton.

"I believe

‘I believe so,’ said Vallaton; ‘yes, she certainly promised, now that I remember. I think that I had better go and meet her. Perhaps, as she is so bad a walker, she may be glad of my assistance.’

Julia bowed her assent; and Vallaton, seemingly rejoicing in the excuse, quickly hurried away.

“Good heavens! my dear mother,” cried Julia, as soon as he was out of the room, “how strange you looked upon Mr. Vallaton! What is the matter with you? You seem as if you had never seen him before.”

‘I never did see him,’ returned Mrs. Delmond, ‘and very little expected to find him here. He is a sort of person with whom, I am sure, your father would be highly displeased with you for cultivating any acquaintance.’

“My father,” repeated Julia, raising up her hands, “displeased with Mr. Vallaton! What does this mean? What has happened, my dear mother, since you were, last here, to occasion this change?”

‘Since I was last here, child! I really do not understand you.’

“Ah! do not, my dear, dearest mother! for heaven’s sake, do not perplex me. Did you not tell me that my father approved of Mr. Vallaton? that he had promised General Villers to—to give his consent to—Oh! my mother, why do you look so astonished?”

‘Why? because I *am* astonished. What had General Villers to do with this man? Or how should your father come to talk of such a person to the General? You seem to me to be quite in a dream. Really, child, I wish you would recollect yourself.’

The heart of Julia sunk within her at this speech.

speech. The vermillion tint which had so lately flushed her lovely cheek, making her brilliant eyes still more brilliant, gave place to the pale livery of despair. She could scarcely retain command enough of her voice faintly to say, as she grasped her mother's hand, "Have I indeed been in a dream? Did I not hear of General Villers's visit to my father, and of his introducing—"

"Major Minden as your lover," said Mrs. Delmond.

"Major Minden!" faintly repeated Julia, her eyes fixed in a ghastly stare. "Then—then, indeed, am I wretched for ever!"

"Indeed, Julia, you are very strange," said Mrs. Delmond. "You seemed mightily pleased with his proposal when I first told you of it; you were then all smiles and acquiescence. What now I wonder has made such an alteration in your sentiments? If this Mr. Vallaton were not a married man, I declare I should think that he had got hold of your heart."

"Is Mr. Vallaton a married man?" said Julia, without being at all conscious of what she said.

"Yes, to be sure," returned her mother; "don't you know that he has a wife and five children?"

"I had forgot that," said Julia, with a vacant smile.

"Why, child, what is the matter with you? You appear quite stupified—bless me, how pale you are! are you sick?"

"Yes; very, very sick!" uttered Julia sinking upon the arm of the sofa, and immediately fainting away.

Her mother, who happily was not subject to violent alarms, quietly went to the kitchen to de-
fire

fire some water. ' Julia is in a fainting fit,' said she to the maid, in the same voice she would have said, Julia has put on her gloves, or Julia wants her slippers; and then, with equal composure, added, ' you had better come to see if you can help her.' The girl stood in no need of the injunction; for no sooner did she hear of her young mistress's having fainted, than forgetful of the respect due to her superior, she sprung past Mrs. Delmond, and was in a moment on her knees by the side of Julia, sprinkling water in her face, and trying all the usual methods of recovery.

Julia at length recovered, but it was to more cruel sufferings than her sickness had occasioned. She at one glance perceived the dreadful consequences of the fatal mistake into which the equivocal expressions of her mother, aided by her own sanguine imagination, had so unfortunately plunged her. Her virgin heart, her plighted vows were given to Vallaton; while her father's promise was passed to the General in favour of a man whom she scarcely recollected to have seen, but whom she was thoroughly convinced it was utterly impossible she should ever love. Thus was she on the eve of one of those cruel persecutions with which so many heroines have been tormented. Often, indeed, had she wondered at having escaped so very common a calamity for such a length of time; and often in imagination had she approved of the spirit with which she was resolved to act upon such an occasion. Already did she behold Major Minden, with the determined and selfish obstinacy of the hateful Solmes, persisting in seizing her reluctant hand; while her father, with all the cruelty of all the Harlowes, attempted to force her to the hateful union. But never, (she resolved) never would she disgrace the prin-

ciples she had adopted, by a base submission to the will of an arbitrary tyrant. Her fate was cruel, but it was not unexampled. From all that she had read, she had rather cause to esteem herself peculiarly fortunate in being so long exempted from the common misfortune of her sex. Few novels furnished an example of any young woman who had been permitted to attain her nineteenth year, without having been distressed by the addresses of a numberless train of admirers, all equally odious and disagreeable as this Major Minden. Where was the female, possessed of any tolerable share of beauty, who had not been persecuted by a cruel hard-hearted father, in favour of some one of the detested wretches by whom she was beset? Why, then, should she complain? Her sufferings were only such as, in the present depraved state of society, were the inevitable lot of her unhappy sex!

Such were the reflections of Julia, on recovering her recollection. But before she had sufficient time to consider the plan of conduct it would be proper to adopt on this momentous crisis of her fate, she was roused from her reverie by Mrs. Delmond, who peremptorily desired to know, what had occasioned the violence of her emotions? The tone in which the question was put, though it had in reality acquired its emphasis from astonishment and curiosity, appeared to Julia a sufficient indication of the determined exertion of despotic authority; she therefore took care to arm herself against the weapons of tyranny and injustice by an evasive answer.

‘The weakness of your spirits!’ rejoined Mrs. Delmond, repeating the concluding words of her daughter. ‘It is strange that your spirits should be so much weaker, now that your health is almost

most quite established; and still stranger, that Major Minden should appear so much more disagreeable to you now than at the time I first mentioned him.'

"Major Minden! ah, dearest Madam, have mercy on me, I beseech you, and repeat not his odious name. It is worse than death to me to hear it. No sound was ever half so hateful to my ears! It thrills my inmost soul with horror! Oh wretched, miserable, and unhappy girl that I am! Why was I doomed to survive the late accident? why was I reserved for this much more unhappy fate? Never, surely, was any one so truly unfortunate! Never was the misery of mortal equal to mine!"

'Julia! why Julia, have you lost your senses? I know not for my life what to think, what to make of all this nonsense. I wonder what your father would say, if he were to hear you! But I would advise you to beware of talking in this ridiculous strain to him.'

"And can my father be so determined against me? Can he be so cruel, so hard-hearted to his Julia, as to force her to a hated union with the man she most detests? Will he not be moved by my prayers? Will he not be touched with pity by my distress? Will he behold the misery of his poor unfortunate Julia, without one feeling of compassion? Oh yes, yes; his heart is steeled by the cruel prejudices of society, and I am doomed to add one to the numerous victims of a depraved and unnatural state of civilization!"

'Really, Julia, while you speak such nonsense, you do not deserve an answer. Let me tell you, Miss, your father is too good to you by half, and has completely spoiled you by his indulgence.'

"And is my mamma too become the advocate

of this detested man? Does she too join in the cruel persecution of her poor unhappy Julia? Oh, my dear mamma, on my knees, if I could, on my knees would I conjure you to spare me—to save me from this cruel, cruel fate.”

‘Surely,’ cried Mrs. Delmond, rising, ‘nothing was ever so provokingly absurd as this ridiculous behaviour. I cannot stay to listen to such jargon, which, I suppose, you have learned from Miss Botherim, who has made herself the town-talk with her nonsense.’

“Oh Madam, dear Madam! dear, dear Mamma! do not leave me in displeasure.”

‘Why should I stay, if you are resolved not to listen to any thing I say? I had, indeed, many things to communicate to you, not only concerning Major Minden, but about young Mr. Churchill, from whom we have had a visit. He made a polite offer of his carriage to fetch you home, which your father has accepted. Indeed, if we had known where to procure one, we should have contrived to have had you carried home a week ago, notwithstanding the opinion of Mr. Gubbles; but as the General’s family had gone to Brighton races, and are not to return till the end of the week, we knew not where to apply. Mr. Churchill, however, has saved us from all further trouble on this head; and has so pleased your father by his behaviour, that if you really give him the preference to the Major, I do not believe your choice will meet with any opposition. The—’

“Dear madam, let me——”

“Nay, do not interrupt me; I will hear no more of your nonsense. The chariot will be here to-morrow afternoon about five o’clock, which your father thinks the best time for your removal. He is so much taken up by the thoughts of seeing
you,

you, that I do not believe he will get a wink of sleep to-night. Indeed, Julia, you can never shew enough of gratitude to so good a father, who loves you as his very soul. I shall not say a word to him of your behaviour this evening, as it would only serve to vex him; and I hope to find you in a better frame to-morrow."

Julia again attempted to speak, but Mrs. Delmond, with more firmness than it was usual for her to exert, prevented her reply; and after giving some directions to the servants, departed; not a little dissatisfied with the conduct of her daughter.

Soon as her mother was out of hearing, Julia burst forth into a pathetic exclamation on the hardship of her destiny. Her calamity had now assumed an hydra form; in the shape of Churchill, another persecutor appeared! And though two were a trifling number, to be sure, compared with the *hosts* which disturb the repose of the Lady Seraphinas and Angelinas, over whose distresses she had shed so many tears, her imagination could even from these have extracted enough of food for terror and alarm, had no such person as Vallaton been in existence. At present, however, it must be confessed, that in the encouragement she had given to that gentleman's addresses; in the interest he had obtained in her affections; and in the utter destruction of the hopes she had been led to entertain of her father's approbation of his suit; she was not without real cause of uneasiness and disquiet.

She bitterly reproached herself, for having been duped by her own ardent imagination into a mistake, which she now perceived she might have seen through on a moment's reflection. But still more bitterly did she bewail those false prejudices which influenced her father's mind; prejudices,

which engendered the wish of seeing her united to a man of established character and independent fortune; and which erroneously concluded, that the want of either of these in the object of her choice would be an obstacle to her felicity.

“Unhappy state of civilization!” cried she; “deplorable constitutions of society! I am doomed to add to the number of your wretched victims! While things continue in the present miserable situation, fathers will be often led into the fatal error of thinking themselves in some instances wiser than their children! Oh, that I had not been born, till truth had enlightened the world!”

In this manner did Julia continue to deplore herself, till the entrance of Mr. Vallaton; who having watched the departure of Mrs. Delmond, was no sooner assured of her being out of sight of the house, than he eagerly returned to renew the interesting conversation which her appearance had so unseasonably interrupted.

‘In tears, my Julia!’ exclaimed her astonished lover: ‘What has occasioned your uneasiness? From whence proceed these looks of soft dejection?’

“Ah! Mr. Vallaton, you see before you the most unfortunate of human beings! My cruel father——”

‘What of him? Has he forbidden you to see me? Has he been so——’

“Alas! he knows not of your visits; but he has formed the dreadful resolution of uniting me to a man my soul detests!”

‘And will you tamely submit to this outrage upon the first principles of justice? Will you, from an immoral and slavish deference to the man who calls himself your father, sacrifice the first rights of humanity—the right of following your
own

own inclination? What magic is there in the name of father, that can sanctify so base a direction of duty?"

"No, my best, my only friend," cried Julia; "be assured I would sooner die than break the promise I have made to you. My father shall never prevail upon me to do that; but I dread the thoughts of what I have to encounter in braving his displeasure."

'As to your promise,' returned Vallaton, 'you know, that by the principles of our true philosophy, all regard to promises is utterly discarded. In the eye of a philosopher no promise is, or ought to be, binding. All scrupulosity about fulfilling the engagements into which we have entered, is childish and absurd. It is not, therefore, because you have *promised* to be mine, that you ought to become so;* but because by an union with me you can best promote the grand end of life—general utility.'

"Dear, generous Vallaton, how noble are thy sentiments! How charmingly disinterested—how purely virtuous!"

'They are simply the deductions of truth. If the person that is chosen for you by your father, should, upon investigation of his principles, be found more enlightened; if he should be possessed of superior powers; if he should be more capable of energizing; if, as a percipient being, he should be endowed with a keener sensibility of your superior merit; should be able to make a higher estimate of the extraordinary powers of your mind; then it becomes my duty to yield to him, who shall in this case be proved a being of greater moral worth.'

"Ah!

* See Pol Jus.

“ Ah ! Vallaton, where shall the man be found possessed of such an exalted way of thinking as yourself ? How mean, compared to yours, would be the selfish sentiments of either of the gentlemen, (for there are two pretenders to my favour) whose addresses are encouraged by my father ! But as to them my mind is perfectly made up.”

‘ Why, then, this cruel agitation of your spirits ? Why this dismay and apprehension ?’

“ And would you have me, without dismay, behold the approach of our separation ! I go home to-morrow ; and long, very long may it be, before we can have an opportunity of seeing each other again.”

‘ And why go home to-morrow, my adored Julia ? Why obey the arbitrary mandate of a tyrant father ? Why return to the base controul of unjust and usurped authority ? Let me at least conjure you to examine the consequences of your return, that so your conduct may be governed by proper motives.’

“ Alas ! what can I do ? what apology can I offer for delay ? He knows I am now able to bear a much longer journey.”

The eyes of Vallaton sparkled with extacy as, seizing her hand, he eagerly exclaimed, ‘ Then take that longer journey, my beloved Julia ; take it under the protection of a man who prefers you to all your sex, because of your *real, intrinsic, and imperishable* excellence ; who loves you as virtue personified ; and whose love must, of necessity, be lasting as the adamant foundation on which it stands.’

“ Good heavens ! Mr. Vallaton, what is it you propose ? Elope with you ! no more to see my father ! Ah, no ; it would too surely break his heart.

heart. I cannot think of taking so very unjustifiable a step."

"Unjustifiable!" repeated Vallaton; and upon what principles unjustifiable? If, indeed, you can prove your father to be a being of more moral worth, (and that therefore his happiness ought to be promoted in preference to mine) I have nothing further to urge."

"Alas!" returned Julia, sighing, "how incapable am I of estimating the moral worth of two individuals so opposite in their sentiments, and of characters so totally different. May not both, in their way, be equally estimable?"

"Impossible!" retorted the philosopher; "utterly impossible. To one of us you must give an immediate and decided preference. Let us be judged by the correct and infallible criterion of philosophy. Consider which of us is most likely to benefit the species by the exertion of powers, and energies, and talents; which of us has the most distinct perception of the nature of happiness, and the clearest views of the progress of mind?—For this alone is virtue."

"Alas!" said Julia, "my poor father knows nothing of the new philosophy; but notwithstanding his unhappy prejudices, he is one of the worthiest of men."

"How can one, of my lovely Julia's very superior understanding admit of such contradictions? You confess his ignorance, (for one who knows not the new philosophy must, of course, be ignorant) you own him the victim of narrow and illiberal prejudice, and yet you speak of his worth! What is the worth of any being, but as it tends to general utility? In what respect can such a person as your father benefit society? And what is the
force

force of that claim which he pretends to have upon you?"

"Has he then no claims upon his daughter?"

'How can the well-informed, the philosophically-instructed Julia put such a question? Does she not know that the progress of mind—the virtue, the happiness, the perfection of the human race, depends upon abrogating these unnatural and fastidious distinctions, which aristocratical pride and selfishness have interwoven in the constitutions of society? Has it not been to demonstration proved, that the prejudices of *filial duty*, and *family affection*, *gratitude to benefactors*, and *regard to promises*, are the great barriers to the state of perfect virtue? These obstacles to perfection it is the glory of philosophy to demolish, and the duty of every person, impressed with a sense of perfectibility, to remove. In the present instance, you, my Julia, are called to the energetic conflict by another motive, which involves a duty of a very serious nature. It is in your power to promote the happiness of an individual, whose talents and virtues may be either called forth "to energise, according to the flower and summit of their nature;" or, blasted by the ravages of passion, and withered by the canker of disappointment, may become lost to the grand purpose of general utility. Oh, Julia, let me beseech you to consider——'

Here the note from Bridgetina was put into the hands of Julia by her maid, and amply repaid Mr. Vallaton for the temporary interruption it had occasioned, by the opportunity it afforded him of reinforcing his arguments from the authority of so illustrious an example.

When Miss Botherim had first intimated her intentions of following Henry to London, the
scheme

scheme appeared to Julia to be fraught with romantic absurdity, improper, disgraceful, and ridiculous. But now that it was displayed in its proper colours by the eloquence of Vallaton, she perceived in it the grand effort of a noble mind, that rose superior to the vulgar prejudices of an ill-constituted society.

We shall not fatigue our readers by the particulars of the conversation that ensued. Suffice it to say, that the opposition of Julia to the proposal of her eloquent admirer became fainter and fainter; till, convinced by his arguments, or overcome by his persuasion, she finally consented to set an example of moral rectitude, by throwing off the ignoble chains of filial duty, and to contribute her share to the general weal, by promoting the happiness of one of the most zealous of its advocates.

CHAP. IV.

———“Becoming my critical foe,
 “Has declar’d that my stile is *exceedingly low*;
 “*That facts are mistated, assertions untrue*;
 “*That I give her not half of the praise which is due,*
 “But if the said speeches seem not very good,
 “I will swear I detail’d them as well as I cou’d.”

SIMKIN’S LETTERS.

THE peaceful village of W—— was still hushed in the silence of repose, when just as the steeple-clock repeated the hour of four, Citizen Glib gave notice to Bridgetina of the arrival of the stage-coach. She immediately hastened with him to the inn

inn at which it changed horses, and fortunately found a vacant seat in the heavy-laden vehicle, into which she was helped by the worthy citizen; who, while he pushed her in, gave her his usual advice to exert her energies, to which he was adding some other wise instructions, when the coachman smacked his whip, and drove off.

Little was spoken by any of the party during the ensuing stage, but from what passed at breakfast, our heroine discovered so much of her companions, as to learn that two of them were gentlemen of the law, returning from the assizes, and that the third was a farmer or grazier from her own neighbourhood. They all treated her with great civility, but spoke chiefly to each other concerning affairs to which she was a total stranger, so that a considerable time elapsed before she found an opportunity of joining in the conversation. At length, however, she burst upon their astonished senses in an harangue, by which if they were not greatly edified, the fault must have lain in their own stupidity, or rather, perhaps, in those prejudices which rendered them invulnerable to the weapons of truth. In vain did she labour to convince the two lawyers of the inutility of the law, and of the immorality of every species of coercion. In vain did she conjure up all the flowers of rhetoric, to persuade them to give up a profession which she described to be one uniform mass of error and absurdity.

The two lawyers were not a little astonished to hear such a stream of eloquence flow from so unexpected a source. They for some time thought it inexhaustible, but on putting some pertinent queries to the fair orator, they discovered that her eloquence, like the little coach and horses to be seen in the shew-box at the fair, ran always the same

same round. In vain did they endeavour to make it trace a wider circle; it could neither stop, nor turn, nor go strait forwards, nor move in any other direction than that in which it had at first attracted their curiosity. After exciting it to take two or three rounds over the same ground, they were perfectly satisfied as to the extent of its powers; and in order to give it leisure to run quietly down, they composed themselves to sleep: The honest farmer had resigned himself to Morpheus in the beginning of the debate, so that Bridgetina was left to enjoy the pleasure of her own meditations for the greater part of the journey.

Of all the accumulated evils with which the present unnatural state of civilization is so fully fraught, none is more severely felt by the modern biographer than that facility of communication established throughout all parts of the kingdom; whereby the possibility of adventures upon the road is almost entirely cut off. In former times, an heroine could not travel twenty miles, without encountering so many strange incidents, that the reader no sooner had notice of her having mounted her horse, than his imagination was upon the spur for some great event. Every inn was a scene of action; and every stage so fruitful of adventures, that the judicious writer had some difficulty in compressing them within the limits of his volume. But now that maids and matrons of every rank and station, from the dame of quality who dashes in her chariot and six, to the simple adventures, who from the top of the heavy coach looks down upon her Grace, all may travel from one end of the kingdom to the other, without let, hindrance, or molestation, an author might as reasonably expect to pick up a purse of gold upon the road

as an event worth narrating. If I do not this minute take care, Bridgetina will be at the end of her journey before I finish my digression. Allons, then, my good reader, let us hasten to the inn-door, to be ready to receive her. We are just in time; for here, at the Golden-Cross, you may behold her just alighted:

Impatient as our heroine may be supposed to be to fulfil the great purport of her journey, she found herself so oppressed by fatigue, (this being the first time of her having travelled ten miles from her native village, and so utterly incapable of further exertion, that she resolved to recruit herself by a night's repose. She was, at her own desire, conducted to a bed-chamber, but did not find it so easy a matter to get the bed prepared for her reception. The chambermaid, prudently resolving, that if she did not choose to eat supper, it should not be for want of time, left her for a full hour to enjoy the benefit of her own reflections. In vain did she ring her bell; in vain did she poke her head out into the passage, at the sound of every footstep, and repeat to every waiter an account of her distress. No one seemed to trouble themselves about her; and she saw no alternative, but either to pass the night in her chair, or to throw herself on the bed as it was. She preferred the latter; but just as she was laying down, the chambermaid appeared.

“You ought to have known, young woman,” said Bridgetina, “that man has not as yet arrived at that degree of perfection that can render him insensible to the languor of fatigue. I do not say that you ought to have returned to make my bed, because you promised, but because what you promised you ought to have performed, whether you had promised it or not.”

‘I came

‘ I came as soon as I could get away ;’ replied the girl pertly. ‘ There is no being in twenty places at a time.’

“ What you say is indeed just, in the present state of society ;” returned Bridgetina. “ No one has as yet been capable of energizing in such an extraordinary degree. But who can say what future improvements may not yet take place? Who can set bounds to the attainments of a perfectible being? Or who, that knowing mind to be as all, and matter to be as nothing, will dare pronounce what is, or what is not, possible to its exertions?”

The girl stared, and on surveying our heroine more minutely, wondered that she had not sooner discovered the proofs that were now so evident of her insanity. Perceiving, however, no symptoms of outrageous phrenzy, she went on with her work, but determined to acquaint her mistress with the discovery she had made.

Bridgetina, perceiving that she had attracted the servant’s attention, fatigued as she was, would not lose the favourable opportunity of impressing the mind of a percipient being with the important truths of philosophy. “ I see,” said she, raising her voice, “ I see, by the attention you have given to my discourse, that you are not destitute of moral sensibility. Perhaps, notwithstanding your lowly station, you may, in this house of public reception, have been favoured with an opportunity of listening to the discourses of enlightened men? Perhaps some philosopher, by addressing the common sympathies of our nature, has awakened the dormant powers of your mind. Perhaps the germ of intellect has been aroused. If so, by adding the improvement of to-day with the progress of the day before, you may (though a servant) be no longer

longer destitute of the best characteristics of a rational being ”

‘ You had better get into bed, Ma’am,’ said the girl ; ‘ you will be much the better for a night’s sleep ’

“ Till the progress of mind is further advanced, sleep is, as you say, a necessary restorative to the bodily organs. But if, as I suppose, you have had an opportunity of listening to the deductions of truth, you cannot be ignorant, that the time approaches when sleep shall be no longer necessary. Oh, that to that chain of events, which has been generating from all eternity, some link had been added that would have brought me into the world at a more advanced period ! Oh, that I had lived at an æra when one’s bones could have borne the jolting of a stage coach for a hundred miles without being sensible of fatigue ! But in the present dis-tempered state of civilization it is impossible to energize so effectually. We are only, as you know, my good girl, perfectible, but not perfect beings. And notwithstanding the illustrious examples, recorded in the annals of some celebrated modern romances, of heroines who have energized in so extraordinary a manner, as after having travelled for hundreds of miles on the hard backs of mules or horses, without either stop or refreshment, to have alighted so little wearied with their journey as to have no occasion for the vulgar restorative of sleep, we may depend upon it such instances are yet but rare.”

Bridgetina had no sooner stepped into bed, than the chambermaid hurried to her mistress with the very unwelcome intelligence, that a person of deranged intellects had got possession of one of her apartments.

“ Who

“Who is she? From whence did she come?” asked the mistress.

‘I do not know who she is,’ replied the girl; ‘but from the manner in which she preached, I should suppose her to be a Methodist.’

“Oh, if she be a Methodist, she will be taken care of;” said the mistress, much relieved by this part of the girl’s information. “If she does not get so well as to leave us in the morning, I shall inform some of the congregation, and I know that at least they will not let her want.”

In the morning, as soon as Bridgetina’s bell gave notice of her being awake, the landlady herself attended her; not, however, without the precaution of placing the chambermaid at the door of the apartment, to be ready in case she should find it necessary to call further assistance. The hostess found the young lady up and dressed; and though the extraordinary manner in which her clothes were put on confirmed, in her opinion, the account of the chambermaid, she did not now speak in such a manner as to ratify the suspicion. After answering the civil enquiries of her hostess, she said “she should be glad to have breakfast immediately, as she was impatient to fly to her friends, some of whom she expected would be overwhelmed with rapture at her arrival.”

‘I know some of your friends very well,’ returned the landlady, ‘and must needs declare, that let people say of them what they will, I, for my share, have always found them to be very worthy people.’

“Yes,” said Bridgetina, “they are, to be sure, the destined long-looked-for saviours of the human race; the expungers of ignorance and error; the eradicators of prejudice; the——”

‘Pray,

‘Pray, Ma’am, is Mr. Timothy Tottenham of your acquaintance? He, I am told, is a very powerful preacher.’

“I know no preachers;” retorted Bridgetina, with an air of superlative contempt.

Poor lady! (thought the landlady) she is de-ranged, sure enough. ‘You have, you say, Ma’am, some friends in London, whom you now propose to visit; and if I may presume to advise, I think the sooner you put yourself under their care the better.’

“I shall, you may depend upon it,” replied Bridgetina, “lose no time in accomplishing the great end of my journey. Pray do you know Mrs. Fielding of Hanover-square? It is through her I must obtain the direction to him who is the object of my journey; with whose mind my soul yearns to mingle its sentiments of congenial purity.”

One of the fathers of the congregation, no doubt, thought the landlady. He has evidently touched this poor lady’s conscience, by some very awakening discourse; then courtesying to Bridgetina, she took her leave, kindly wishing that the friend she was in search of might speak comfort to her wounded spirit.

Before we accompany Bridgetina to the house of Mrs. Fielding, it is necessary to give the reader a previous introduction to her acquaintance. A variety of methods presents itself for this purpose. We might either, according to the plan we have hitherto pursued, select from the authorities before us the necessary materials, and then give them to the reader at our own good pleasure, without deigning to account for the manner in which the said materials came into our possession; or we might place him in some convenient situation to
hear

hear the good lady recount her own history to some female confidante, who, though perhaps for years an inmate of her family, must yet be profoundly ignorant, not only of the incidents of her life, but of her temper and dispositions, the names of her connections, and the rank and situation she has always held in society. As this method has the greatest number of precedents in its favour, we should not hesitate to adopt it, did not another present itself, which, while it indulges the indolence of the writer, will be equally conducive to our purpose of instruction. This is no other than transcribing, for our reader's perusal, a letter written some time previous to the period to which we have brought our history, from Mr. Sydney to his son. For which letter we shall refer the reader to the following chapter.

CHAP. V.

“venerate the man whose heart is warm,
 “Whose hands are pure, whose doctrine and whose life,
 “Coincident, exhibit lucid proof
 “That he is honest in the sacred cause.
 “To such I render more than mere respect,
 “Whose actions say that they respect themselves.”

COWPER.

Letter from the Reverend Mr. Sydney to his Son.

“I Can neither be offended nor surprised, my dear Henry, at your expressing a desire to be acquainted with the origin of that friendship which
 has

has so long subsisted betwixt me and your benefactress. You have a natural claim upon my confidence, and the terms upon which, from your boyish days, we have lived together, may prove to you how fully I acknowledge it.

“ If I have hitherto been more reserved upon this subject than upon any other, it has only been because where the feelings of another were concerned, I did not find myself at equal liberty to be explicit. I detest the affectation of mystery, and think the necessity for secrecy is seldom any other than imaginary. But where silence is no infringement on the duty of sincerity, where it does not interfere with the law of truth, it is a debt due to delicacy, the payment of which is guaranteed by sensibility and honour.

“ Without the consent of Mrs. Fielding, therefore, I should have declined a compliance with your request; but it is at her own desire, that I now proceed to give you a sketch of her little history.

“ You know the degree of our relationship, which is just near enough to authorise a poor cousin to claim kindred with a rich one, and sufficiently distant to afford the latter an excuse for forgetting the connection. Her father was a clergyman of the church of England, and possessed a very good living, but which was inconsiderable when compared to his expectations. These looked to the first preferments in the church, to which he was so certain of succeeding, that he thought it proper to postpone the thoughts of making any provision for his family till they were actually in his possession. The deanery of —, worth fourteen hundred a year, was only withheld from him by the life of an infirm old man, who had long been wasted to a shadow by the severe attacks of a chronic

chronic asthma. Nothing could be more precarious than such a tenure of existence, except those air-built speculations upon futurity, whose rapid extinction so often mocks the hopes of man. Two years before the death of this confirmed valetudinary, a fever of a few days carried off his appointed successor, by whose death his only daughter, then in her nineteenth year, was left destitute of all provision, and doomed to undergo the mortifying trials of dependence.

“ A few months previous to the death of Mr. Fielding, I had, in consequence of a recommendation from Professor *****, under whose auspices I had finished my studies at the college at Glasgow, been appointed tutor to the sons of Lord Brierston. I had entered the family with no great predilection in favour of such a situation; but in the politeness of his lordship’s manners, and in the good dispositions of my pupils, I found a counter-balance to the mortifications which petulant affluence is ever ready to bestow on humble poverty. Lady Brierston, his lordship’s second wife, was the widow of an eastern nabob, who had left to her the whole of his immense fortune, which, during the period of her own life, and in case of surviving his lordship, she still reserved in her own disposal. This lady was first-cousin to Mr. Fielding, and to her protection, at the death of her father, was Maria Fielding consigned.

“ Never shall the day of her arrival at Brierston be effaced from my memory. Never shall I forget the dignified humility, the modest and graceful propriety with which she answered the unfeeling interrogatories of her haughty kinswoman.

Lady Brierston soon felt, but could not so soon pardon, the superiority of her dependent cousin. From a knowledge of what passed in her own

mind, she considered pride as the necessary concomitant of every advantage, natural or acquired; and to mortify this imaginary pride, she concluded to be equally wise and meritorious.

“ In the execution of this plan of mortification, her ladyship had abundance of auxiliaries.

“ It is the peculiar misfortune of those who move in a certain sphere, to have their worst propensities so flattered as to render it almost impossible for them to escape the snare of self-delusion. The possessors of rank and fortune are every one surrounded by a sort of atmosphere of their own, which not only distorts and obstructs the view of external objects, but which renders it difficult for them to penetrate the motives of their own hearts. Such was the situation of Lady Brierston. As her charity and benevolence, in taking the orphan daughter of her cousin under her protection, was the theme of daily praise; she could not doubt that she had exerted a very extraordinary degree of those amiable qualities. And no sooner did she, by a sarcastic sneer at the superior information and extraordinary talents of her cousin, declare the birth of jealousy and envy, than she received such encomiums on her *wisdom* and *prudence* in checking the conceit of a young creature who had been quite spoiled by indulgence, as perfectly satisfied her of the propriety of her conduct.

“ When her ladyship formed the resolution of wounding the spirit of her too amiable relation, by attacks upon her supposed vanity, she was ignorant of the character with which she had to deal. The mind of Maria Fielding was too great for the abode of vanity. Her ideas of excellence were too grand, too exalted, to permit her to view her own attainments through any other medium than that of unfeigned humility. She perceived the unkindness

unkindness of her cousin, and grieved at the proofs of it, as they appeared to bear witness against the heart of one she wished to love; but she was not to be mortified by sneers against learned ladies, while conscious she could make no pretensions to the character of *learned*, or hurt by allusions to that state of poverty to which she had never attached the idea of disgrace, and of which, therefore, she knew not how to be ashamed. In short, the real dignity of Miss Fielding's character rose above every assault; and at last so far conquered even the selfish arrogance of her proud protectress, that she gradually became less assiduous in her efforts to torment her, and finally suffered herself to reap the advantage of those talents which she had so long pretended to despise.

Miss Fielding was not long an inhabitant of Brierston, till my heart did homage to her virtues. The similarity of our tastes, sentiments, and dispositions, was of itself sufficient to create a sympathy betwixt us, which was perhaps increased by the similarity of our situations. In short, my son, for I feel it painful to dwell upon the subject, our mutual esteem was soon increased to the ardency of a sincere and mutual passion, which, during the two years that we lived under the same roof, was the source of the sweetest pleasure, the most delicious hope, and the most anxious solicitude.

“ At length the hour of trial arrived. Lord Brierston, who had for some time entertained suspicions of our attachment, questioned me upon the subject. I had too great an abhorrence of duplicity to deny the justice of his suspicions. He heard my confession in silence, and left me without any expression either of censure or approbation. A week passed without any alteration in

the behaviour of his lordship, which was at all times polite, distant, and reserved. At the end of that period he one morning entered my apartment with a look that denoted unusual satisfaction; and desiring his sons to leave the room, told me he was exceedingly pleased at having it in his power effectually to promote my happiness. I need not, to a young man like you, tell how my heart throbbed at this intelligence, or describe with what tumultuous joy it bounded at the idea of being united to the dear object of my affections? For such was the interpretation I gave to the designs of his lordship: nor was I deceived in my conjectures. He told me that from the moment he had perceived the mutual affection that subsisted between me and his amiable cousin, he had conceived a plan for our union, which, though it had at first met with some opposition from his lady, was now honoured with her full approbation. It was fully ripe for execution. I had nothing to do but to take orders, and the living of——, worth more than six hundred a year, waited my acceptance. Nor should the cousin of Lady Brierston be suffered to enter into any family as a beggar. Her ladyship had that morning sealed to her a gift of two thousand pounds, which they should both think very well bestowed upon one whose whole character and conduct was so worthy of their esteem. “You make no reply, Mr. Sydney,” said his lordship, perceiving the contending emotions that struggled in my breast. “Is there any thing disagreeable to you in my proposal?”

“What reply can I make to generosity so noble—to goodness so unmerited? And yet, forgive me, my Lord; forgive me, if, in the tumult your lordship’s unexpected proposal has excited, I am deprived of the power of deciding. Yet why

why should I hesitate? The moment that makes passion the conqueror of conscience, renders me unworthy of your esteem; unworthy of the affection of her who is dearer to me than every thing but duty."

'I really do not understand you;' returned his Lordship, with apparent pique. 'Your conscience is of a very extraordinary nature, indeed, if it stands betwixt you and a good living.'

"Are there not, my Lord, certain preliminaries necessary to qualify me for that preferment? Am I not by these to declare my solemn assent to explanations and points of doctrine which either I do not understand, or cannot approve? And should I do so with one remaining doubt upon my mind, must I not incur the heavy guilt of perjury?"

'And pray, Mr. Sydney, do you consider yourself as so much wiser and so much better than all the learned and worthy men who every day make the declaration at which you scruple? Are all who enter the church to be considered as perjured?'

"God forbid! Various are the views, which, with equal integrity of intention, may be taken of the same subject. That which I cannot reconcile to myself, another may fully approve. The arguments which carry conviction to my mind, may to his appear nugatory and futile. No honest man will condemn another for differing from him in opinion; but who can approve the hypocrite, who, from views of interest or ambition, makes public profession of opinions which privately he condemns? No; rather let me eat the bread of misery, and drink the tears of affliction, than purchase the enjoyment of every earthly bliss at the expence of sincerity."

“ His Lordship, far from being convinced by my arguments, was not a little displeased at my presumption. In daring to think for myself, he thought I had assumed a right to which I had no proper title. His prejudices, from birth, education, and habit, were strong, but his heart was still benevolent. He wished me to overcome scruples he considered as ridiculous; and did not doubt, that upon reflection I would open my eyes to my true interest. He gave me two days for deliberation, at the end of which I was either to be considered as the future husband of Miss Fielding, or take my leave of Brierston, and all that it contained, for ever.

“ You, my dear Henry, are yet a stranger (oh! may you long be so) to the wild impetuosity of an extravagant and domineering passion. An union with Miss Fielding had long comprised in it every idea of earthly bliss. Honours I could have spurned; fortune I could have despised; but to reject the chosen mistress of my affections was an effort of virtue to which my feeble soul was hardly equal.

“ While his Lordship was conversing with me, Lady Brierston, willing to take to herself as much merit in the affair as possible, had communicated to Miss Fielding the whole scope of the generous plan that had been formed for our future happiness. Judge, then, what must have been her feelings in beholding me; when, instead of the ardent lover, transported into extacy at the blissful prospect that had been opened to him, she beheld a trembling wretch, writhing with the torture of contending emotions, and pale from the agony of despair! I saw how keenly the disappointment pierced her gentle soul. I could not bear the sight, but hastily getting up from table
as

as soon as the cloth was removed, buried myself for the rest of the day in my own apartment.

“To leave me at perfect liberty to pursue my deliberations, his Lordship had sent my pupils on a visit to their grandfather, so that I was master of my own time; but far from being able to employ it in investigation and argument, I suddenly yielded to the stupor that had stolen upon my senses, and had not yet found courage to determine in what language to address my patron, when I was roused from my painful lethargy by a message from Miss Fielding. She desired to see me in the library, and thither with trembling steps I instantly attended her. She, too, was in agitation; but it was not the agitation of doubt. An air of heroic fortitude mingled with the native meekness and gentleness that characterised her manners. She held out her hand to me when I entered. ‘Noble, excellent, Sydney,’ said she; ‘I have ever thought you worthy of my esteem, and now shall I be for ever exalted in my own for having distinguished your merit. But why, my friend, this perturbation? Is it possible that you can hesitate? Can you entertain a doubt about how you are to proceed? Tell me, I beseech you; to me you may safely intrust the secrets of your soul; you shall find that I am worthy of your confidence.’

“I know not what answer I returned, but it sufficiently betrayed the irresolute state of my mind, and discovered to her how much I stood in need of the support she so generously bestowed.

‘Has your reason been convinced?’ returned she, with the most unshaken firmness. ‘Does God and your conscience bear witness that it has? You cannot say so. Ah! then never, with such tremendous witnesses against you, will I be the

partner of your bosom. Sooner would I beg my bread with you through the world, than share with you a throne purchased at a price so dear.'

"It would be injustice to this admirable woman, to pretend to give a minute detail of the arguments she adduced to fix my wavering resolution, and to give effect and vigour to my hitherto unshaken principles. Far less can I convey any idea of the dignity and sweetness of her manner, while she endeavoured to soothe the struggling emotions of my troubled soul; and by distant hope to alleviate the pangs of present disappointment. Even at this distance of time I find the subject too much for me. I shall therefore quit it for the present, and renew it in my next letter. Adieu."

Second Letter of Mr. Sydney.

"MY DEAR HENRY,

"YOU express so much impatience for the remainder of Mrs. Fielding's story, that I can no longer delay to gratify your curiosity.

'You cannot imagine how I could ever enter into any other connection.'

"At your time of life the surprise is natural, and I freely pardon the reproach that is implied in it. When you arrive at my age, your notions of eternal constancy may, perhaps, be somewhat less sanguine. But though the object of a first affection may be lost, and time may so far reconcile us to the loss, as to supply the vacancy by another

ther love, never will the heart become totally indifferent to the first object of its tenderness.

“ It is I suppose, from a consideration of this fact, that women, who are in general much better casuists in these matters than we are, seem to be universally agreed in treating those whom they suspect of having (at however distant a period) once possessed a share in their husband’s affections, with hatred, jealousy, and aversion. Not so your excellent mother. Greatly superior to the mean jealousy of little minds, she felt a peculiar complacency for every object that had ever been dear to that faithful husband whose affections she knew to be now her own. But to return to the promised conclusion of my narrative.

“ Strengthened by the fortitude of my charming friend, I was enabled calmly to review the arguments that had formerly occurred to my mind upon the subject in question. Every objection remained in full force. They might, perhaps, have been removed to me, as they have been to others, by some new light or satisfactory explanation; but I did not think myself at liberty upon this *peradventure* to stake my integrity and honour.

“ In a letter to his lordship I gave such an explanation of my sentiments as I hoped might have proved satisfactory; but I was mistaken. It must be a mind of no common greatness, that can bear to have its intentions thwarted by those on whom it meant to confer obligation, and not take offence. His lordship felt my refusal as ingratitude, and treated my objections as the wild dreams of fanaticism, or the pretended scruples of hypocrisy.

“ The censures of his Lady were still more severe; her indignation was unbounded. From

her lips I received the dreadful assurance, that the least attempt on my part to see or correspond with Miss Fielding would be the means of sending that young lady destitute into the world, and for ever depriving her of the favour of her present protectors. For the contumely of pride, and the bitterness of reproach, I came prepared to the conference ; but this, this was a sentence equally severe and unexpected. I however made no difficulty in engaging my promise never to enter into any clandestine correspondence with Miss Fielding ; but the privilege of taking leave of her, either in person or by letter, I would by no means relinquish. Seeing me firm and resolute in my purpose, her Ladyship at length gave her reluctant consent to my writing one letter before I left Brierston, which should be delivered on my departure ; but the happiness of seeing her was a blessing which I was destined never more to enjoy.

“ On leaving Brierston, I returned to the university of Glasgow, and in the pursuit of science sought to obtain the restoration of tranquillity. My slender finances might have been augmented from the small fund raised by subscription for the support of the sons of our clergy ; but I could not in conscience accept of a bounty which was intended for the assistance of the indigent and the helpless. In my learning and talents I found a more worthy resource.

“ Under the patronage of the Professors, I formed a class for classical reading, which was chiefly attended by young men of fortune, who wished to facilitate the progress of their knowledge and information. Mr. Campbell was one of my pupils, and it was at this time that strong friendship was cemented, which was only dissolved by

by his death. My attachment to him would have afforded me a sufficient inducement to accept of his proposal of accompanying him to the Continent, without the prospect of any pecuniary advantage; but with a firmness and generosity peculiar to himself, he peremptorily insisted on my acceptance either of a large salary during our tour, or of a life-annuity at its conclusion; an alternative which had been formerly offered by his guardian to another gentleman. The idea of Maria Fielding rushed upon my mind, and I immediately accepted of the latter, in the fond hopes that it might one day be shared by her who was still mistress of my heart.

“Two years and a half had then elapsed from the period of my leaving Brierston, nor had I in all that tedious space heard one word of intelligence concerning its inhabitants. On the morning we arrived at Dover, happening to run my eye over a London newspaper that lay on the table, my attention was arrested by the following paragraph: ‘On Tuesday last was married by special licence, at the house of Lord Brierston, in Piccadilly, Sir William Danvers, bart. to Miss Maria Fielding, cousin to Lady Brierston.’ I shall not attempt describing to you my feelings upon this occasion; they were, perhaps, beyond what the disappointment of any earthly hope ought to have inflicted upon a rational being. Of the truth of the intelligence I could not entertain a doubt. Little did I imagine, that information given to the public in this authentic form could be a forgery! Little did I conjecture, that a wanton ebullition of female malice could have produced the wicked and accursed lie; or that a refutation of it was to be given in the next paper. That paper, however, I did not see; for
before

before it reached Dover, a favourable wind had wafted us to the Gallic shore.

“Deep, very deep, was the wound which this intelligence gave to my heart. But, thanks to the goodness of Providence, the wounds of the heart are not by nature intended to be indelible; nor do they ever resist the healing influence of time, except when the will, acted upon by an over-heated imagination, resists the salutary assistance of reason. Severe as was the conflict, I struggled not in vain to teach my heart submission to irremediable evil. The time spent in our long tour assisted my endeavours, and an incident which occurred on our way back to England, gave a new turn to my ideas, and presented a new object to my affections.

“On our return from Italy, through the south of France, we happened one day to be detained by accident at a small village, remarkable for the salubrity of its air, and the poverty of its inhabitants. On taking a walk through the village, as I stopped at the door of one of the houses to speak to a poor creature who solicited my charity, I observed a female come out of the house in tears.

“She is dead!” said she to a person who met her in the street; the good lady is dead, and I believe the dear creature will die with grief too; it almost breaks my heart to see her.” The other observed, that “it was no wonder the poor young lady should be afflicted; it was very hard to lose both father and mother in a strange country.”

“I could no longer forbear enquiring into the circumstances of a case that appeared so interesting, and was informed that the person of whom they spake was a young lady from my own country,

try, who had accompanied her parents to the south of France, which they were induced to visit on account of the declining state of the old gentleman's health: that he had died six weeks before; and that his widow and daughter were preparing for their return to England, when the former was seized with a fever, which had that morning put a period to her existence.

"I was so much affected by the idea of the young stranger's situation, that I involuntarily advanced towards the door of her lodgings, but afraid of hurting her feelings by abruptly intruding upon her affliction, I there hesitated. I knew not, indeed, how to proceed. At length recollecting myself, I enquired for her maid. Alas! she had no maid; she had herself been the only attendant of both father and mother. I prevailed upon the woman of the house to carry up a message, informing the fair mourner, that an English gentleman was below and wished to see her. The fond remembrances that rushed upon her mind at this unexpected intelligence, occasioned such a powerful revulsion of feeling as to overcome her senses. The fortitude that had supported her through all the trying scenes of sorrow, now so entirely forsook her, that she fainted away. The woman called to me for help, and I hastily entered the apartment. How striking was the scene that there presented itself to my view! the poor afflicted girl had sunk upon the bed that supported the lifeless body of her mother. Her cheek, pale as that of the corpse, pressed the clay-cold hand of her departed parent, while her snowy arm, thrown over the body, seemed in death to cling to the protectress of her youth. The old woman being too feeble to give any effectual assistance, I took
up

up the lovely creature in my arms, and carried her into the adjoining room, where I had at length the pleasure of seeing her restored to life and recollection.

“Such, Henry, was my first interview with your dear, beloved, and ever-to-be lamented mother! Her gentle, generous, and grateful heart magnified the common exertions of humanity into deeds of extraordinary merit. I could not be unconscious of the interest I had in her affections, or remain insensible to the value of such a treasure. By a sympathy of tastes, views, and sentiments, our hearts were soon so firmly united, that the arrangements for our future life were formed without difficulty. Immediately after our nuptials we retired to my native village, where, having received ordination, I became the pastor of my father's little flock, who I humbly hope will one day witness for me, that my endeavours to promote their temporal and eternal happiness have neither been lukewarm nor ineffectual!

“I need say nothing of our domestic felicity to the dear boy who has at once shared and augmented every pleasure of his parent's heart; but shall only hint to you, that the full value of that home-felt happiness you have hitherto witnessed, will not probably be truly known till a more enlarged knowledge of the world shall enable you to make comparisons. Then, when you behold the misery of family dissensions, the heart-burnings of contention, and all the little gnawing sorrows which opposition of sentiments and difference in opinion create in the generality of houses, you will look back to the cheerful fire-side of your father, and say, with the wise king of Israel, surely, “Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.”

“ On

“On my return to England, I had forborne to make any enquiry about the supposed Lady Danvers; and the retirement in which we lived, precluded us from the possibility of receiving any intelligence concerning people who were in every respect so far removed from our own situation. When you were about five years old, I was called to the melancholy office of attending my friend Mr. Campbell in his last illness. I had been absent about a fortnight, when your mother was one day surprised by a carriage driving up to the door. As it was the first that had ever stopt at it, she was thrown into a considerable degree of alarm, and dreaded that something had befallen me, for of a visitor to herself she had not the least idea. A lady begged to see her, who was immediately admitted to the parlour. She at first appeared a little embarrassed; but soon recovered herself, and with a peculiar air of sweetness and affability informed my wife, that she was a near relation, and had formerly been an acquaintance of her husband's, and having been accidentally led to that part of the country, could not resist the inclination she felt of introducing herself to the partner of his affections, and embracing his little family. You soon caught her attention, and the ardour with which she pressed you to her bosom, while tears stole from her eyes, convinced my wife that she had a more than ordinary interest in him from whom you sprung.

“May I,” asked my wife, with hesitation, “May I enquire the name of the lady who does my boy so much honour?”

“My name is, I suppose, quite unknown to you, Madam. *You* never, I dare say, heard of Maria Fielding?”

“Is

"Is it, then, Lady Danvers that I behold?" returned my wife, in astonishment.

'No,' said Miss Fielding, equally astonished at such a supposition, 'my name never has, nor ever will be changed.'

"A mutual explanation immediately took place. I need not tell you, how affecting to both these amiable women such an explanation must necessarily be. Equally noble, and equally generous, the sympathy of their affections served but to endear them to each other. Assured that my absence was still to be prolonged for another fortnight, Miss Fielding frankly accepted of my wife's invitation to remain with her for a few days; and in that time made her the confidante of all that had befallen her since the hour of our separation. When they parted, it was with mutual regret, softened by the promise of punctual correspondence.

"Soon as Miss Fielding's carriage was out of sight, you flew to your mother to shew her a pretty book with which she had presented you, when, at her desire, you had crept up to the carriage to give her another parting kiss. On opening it, a paper dropped out, addressed to *Master Henry Sydney*; it contained two bank-notes for a hundred pounds each, and these words—*An annual gift from the most affectionate of friends to the child of her adoption.* You know the punctuality with which this annuity has ever since been paid, but you do not know the difficulty I made to accept of it, or the delicacy of the methods employed by this generous woman to reconcile me to the thoughts of my son's becoming the object of her bounty. We at length compromised the matter; I giving my consent to your receiving the annuity till you had finished your education; and Mrs. Fielding

Fielding promising on her part to withdraw it as soon as you were established in a profession.

“ I shall now satisfy your curiosity with regard to all that befel Miss Fielding from the period of my leaving Brierston :—

“ When I so rashly credited the report of her marriage, I did not sufficiently consider the nature of love in such a breast as that of Maria Fielding’s. In a mind like hers, this pure and delicate sentiment exalts the object of its attachment so far above the rest of the human race, that the idea of all that is deserving of esteem, admiration, or affection, becomes associated with its form. Mere passion is in its nature fickle and transitory, but an attachment such as I have described will bid defiance to time ; and though it may submit to the control of reason, will, long after all the *passion* with which it was first connected has been obliterated, retain its influence over the breast. The woman who can *suddenly* and *lightly* change the object of her affections, may make what pretensions to sentiment and delicacy she pleases, but is in reality the slave of passions modesty would blush to own.

“ Not such was the pure and affectionate heart of Maria Fielding. In vain, after my departure did Lady Brierston load me with epithets of reproach, and endeavour to influence the mind of her cousin in my disfavour. She, with modest firmness, persisted in justifying my conduct, which, she candidly confessed, had not only gained her approbation, but rivetted her esteem. The confession of continued regard for me, was construed by her Ladyship into insolence and ingratitude ; it aggravated her harshness, and rendered the capricious petulance of a temper, arrogant by nature, and callous from prosperity, every day more and
more

more intolerable. All this Miss Fielding continued to endure with that christian meekness which blunts the arrows of malignity, and is the only true shield against the insults of the proud, and the sneers of the scornful. Instead of bemoaning the situation that subjected her to the bitterness of dependence, she considered it as an opportunity afforded by Providence for extending her knowledge of the human heart; and exerted herself to improve it into an increasing fund of wisdom and virtue.

“ Happy the mind,

“ That can translate the stubbornness of fortune .

“ Into so quiet and so sweet a style !”

“ Notwithstanding the contempt which her Ladyship affected for the understanding of her cousin, she yet frequently felt herself obliged to yield to its ascendancy. This ascendancy was invariably made use of by Miss Fielding to promote the interests of the humble children of poverty, whose situations she frequently had it in her power to represent in such a light as procured for them that relief which may be wrung from unfeeling affluence by addressing its pride, when application would be made in vain to its charity.

“ This consideration would, probably, have retained Miss Fielding at Brieriton, had not her refusal of the addresses of Sir William Danvers inflamed the resentment of her Ladyship to such a height, as rendered their separation inevitable. She then retired to a small village in the neighbourhood of —, where she was received as a boarder into the family of a respectable farmer.

“ Even here she found means of employing her time to the advantage of the little circle by which she was surrounded. By her instructions she improved

proved the young ; by her sympathy she consoled the unfortunate ; and by her example of unrepining patience, humility, and piety, she edified all who came within the sphere of her observation. To raise a little fund for deeds of charity, she had recourse to her pen ; and in this retirement she composed several little treatises, chiefly intended for the benefit of her own sex, and calculated to restore that intellectual vigour which the whole course of their present mode of education tends so effectually to destroy.

“ Thus did she, by the exertions of a superior mind, transmute evil into good ; and in a situation in which most of her sex would have indulged in a listless and low-spirited despondency, continue to give dignity to herself by the employment of her faculties, while she promoted the virtue and the happiness of others.

“ From this place she was recalled by the accounts of the melancholy situation of Lady Brierston. Her Ladyship, now in the second year of her widowhood, had, by a paralytic stroke, entirely lost the use of one side, and was become such an object of compassion, that the delicate nerves of her *friends* were too much shocked to bear the sight of her distress. She was, indeed, no sooner incapable of contributing to the amusement, or flattering the vanity of her former associates, than she found herself deserted and forlorn. Even the formal enquiries by which she was for some time mocked, were by degrees neglected ; and she was left, without the consolation of beholding one pitying tear shed over her calamity, to the care of mercenaries, and the comfort of her own reflections.

“ In a heart like Miss Fielding’s, the sufferings of a fellow-creature never fail to annihilate the feelings

feelings of resentment. On the wings of gratitude and affection she flew to the consolation of her former benefactress. She attended her with unceasing assiduity through the remaining tedious course of her disorder; bore with unshrinking patience the peevishness of a bad temper, rendered still more irascible by the pressure of disease; and cheerfully complied with all the whims and caprices to which a mind weakened by such a malady is subject.

“ At length the death of her noble kinswoman released her from this very painful situation, and she was preparing to return to her former retirement; when, very unexpectedly, on examining her Ladyship’s will, it was discovered that the assurances she had from every quarter received of having been cut off from all share in her fortune, were without foundation; but that, on the contrary, she was left sole heiress of all her great possessions.

“ Of the use she has made of the noble fortune thus bequeathed her, you have heard too much of her deeds of charity to be ignorant. May the prayers for her life that are every day put up from the grateful hearts of the indigent and afflicted, ascend to the throne of the Most High! and long may she continue to bless the world by her example, and to furnish it with a living instance of the efficacy of *fixed* and *steady* principles of virtue!

“ Adieu, my dearest Henry. God bless you, and make me sensible of the blessing he has in you bestowed on your affectionate father,

H. S.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

“Deep vers’d in books, and shallow in himself.”
MILTON.

THE hour of dinner at Mrs. Fielding’s had just been reported by the hall clock, as Henry Sydney knocked at the door. He found his patroness in the drawing-room, surrounded by a select party of friends, to all of whom she particularly presented him. Dinner being then announced, the company moved to the parlour, where it was some time before the attention due to her guests permitted Mrs. Fielding to address her young friend. At length she took an opportunity of enquiring whether he had seen the lady from W——, who had that morning enquired for him at her house?

“You greatly astonish me, Madam!” said Henry; “I know of no lady from W——, nor have I been at my lodgings since twelve o’clock.”

“Did the lady leave any message for Doctor Sydney?” enquired Mrs. Fielding.

“No, Madam,” answered the servant, “she neither left any message, nor would she give her name; though the second time she called, I told her that as Doctor Sydney was to dine here, she might depend on my punctually delivering either.”

“She then called twice,” said Henry. “How do you know, Mr. Wethersby, that she came from W——?”

“She said so herself,” returned the butler; and that she need not leave her name, as you, sir, would not fail to discover it by the power of *tender sympathy*.”

The

The confusion of Henry was not a little augmented by observing the universal *simper* occasioned by these words. Mrs. Fielding herself could scarcely forbear laughing: she, however, would not add to the evident distress of Henry, by giving way to the impulse. The same delicacy did not operate upon Mr. Sardon, the gentleman who sat opposite to Henry, who looking earnestly in his face, exclaimed, "And by the power of tender sympathy Dr. Sydney has discovered it. Oh, a parish-certificate could not have described the fair lady in language more intelligible! But pray, sir, is this the common stile of your visiting-cards in the country?"

Henry replied in some vexation, 'that really his question was as unintelligible as the lady's message; he confessed he could comprehend neither the one nor the other.'

"No," returned Mr. Sardon; "and have you really no sort of guess who the dear creature is? Are there, then, so many from whom you would expect a similar message? What a happy man you are!"

'Upon my honour,' returned Henry, (whose earnestness to clear himself made the affair appear still more ridiculous) 'I declare I have not the least conception of who the lady is—and suppose it will all turn out to be a mere mistake.'

"Poor lady!" cried Mr. Sardon, "the little thought that eight and forty hours of London air could destroy the power of *tender sympathy* so effectually!"

In this manner did Mr. Sardon continue to amuse himself at the expence of Henry, during the time of dinner; just as the desert was put upon the table, a hackney-coach stopped at the door. "Ah," said Mr. Sardon, observing how anxiously

anxiously Henry listened to the voices in the hall, "I see, Doctor, the tender sympathies are not quite extinguished; they were only dormant—but spring to life at the knock of a hackney-coachman—as I live, here she comes!"

At that moment the voice of Miss Botherim distinctly reached the ears of Henry, who heard her saying to the servant as he offered to conduct her to another room. "I tell you I will go to him wherever he is, and have no objection to see Mrs. Fielding." Petrified with astonishment he beheld her enter, when, after making a formal curtsy at the door, she immediately made up to him, saying, "So, I have found you out at last!" The distress of Henry, as she approached towards him, is not to be described. He involuntarily shrunk from her approach. "I knew you would be surprised," said she, in a tone of tenderness; "you were not prepared for the pleasure of seeing me so soon."

"The pleasure is indeed very unexpected," said Henry, in great confusion. "Pray is Mrs. Botherim in town?"

"She in town!" cried Bridgetina, "no, no; but I shall reserve all the interesting particulars of my leaving W—— for your private ear, in the mean time pray introduce me to Mrs. Fielding."

Henry would rather have undertaken a journey to the Antipodes, but perceiving the astonished looks of his patroness, he thought it best to lose no time in announcing to her who Miss Botherim really was.

Mrs. Fielding, whose politeness flowed from a deeper source than the established rules of etiquette, and the fictitious forms of ceremony, received Miss Botherim not only with good-breeding, but with that complacency which is the offspring of good-nature. The very strange appearance of
Miss

Miss Botherim, the deformity of her person, the fantastic singularity of her dress, rendered more conspicuous by the still stranger singularity of her manners, were to her benevolent heart so many motives to pity, and seemed alike to claim her compassion and protection. The abruptness of her intrusion she attributed to ignorance, and the extraordinary mode of her addressing Henry to simplicity, neither of which were, in her eyes, subjects of ridicule; whose only true province she considered it to be to expose the arrogant pretensions of vanity, and to unmask the insidious designs of sophistry and deceit. She ordered a chair for Miss Botherim near her own, to the great relief of Henry, who was not a little ashamed of his very unwelcome visitor, whose unexpected appearance he was totally at a loss to explain. The behaviour of Mrs. Fielding gave the ton to her guests, some of whom were very much inclined to indulge their risibility at the appearance of Miss Botherim, till the stile of Mrs. Fielding's reception convinced them of the impropriety of such a behaviour. Mr. Sardon, indeed, could not forbear sily congratulating Henry on his uncommon felicity, and when the ladies retired, he still more unmercifully rallied him upon his enviable conquest.

Bridgetina, whom total want of observation rendered unconscious of any breach of the established forms and customs of society, felt no pain from either bashfulness or embarrassment. She did not wait for an invitation to accompany the ladies to the drawing-room; but bent upon the prosecution of her plans with regard to Henry, she resolved without ceremony to remain at Mrs. Fielding's the rest of the evening.

Mrs.

Mrs. Fielding knew not what to make of her ; she was distressed at the poor girl's thus exposing herself to the derision of her guests, but so unwilling to hurt her feelings, that she could not bring herself to wear the appearance of wishing for her departure. The gentlemen very soon followed the ladies to the drawing-room, where the circle was enlarged by additional visitors, it being an evening on which Mrs. Fielding was always known to be at home.

Henry was extremely vexed at perceiving Miss Botherim still of the party. Taking care to place himself at as great a distance from her as possible, he entered into immediate conversation with the person next him, avoiding to look the way she was ; and though her eyes were fixed upon him from the moment of his entrance, happily for Henry no one could possibly follow their oblique glances to the object on which they darted their most tender beams.

“ You are fond of the country, I presume, Madam ;” said Mr. Sardon, placing his chair by Bridgetina. “ I am greatly mistaken, if you will find the society of London at all congenial to your feelings.”

“ Why so, Sir ?”

“ Because it is seldom agreeable to a person of refined sensibility.”

Bridgetina drew up her head, with a look of much approbation. Mr. Sardon continued : “ In shady groves and purling streams there is something so soothing to a susceptible mind, so——”

“ A mind of great powers, Sir,” said Bridgetina, bridling, and interrupting him, “ is superior to the operation of physical causes. It is in no case to be influenced by surrounding objects. *A person of talents, in the midst of the most crowded street,*

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can

can give full scope to his imagination. I make no doubt, you, Sir, who appear to be possessed of no common abilities, have experienced the truth of this. Have you not *laughed, and cried, and entered into nice calculations, and digested sagacious reasonings, and consulted by the aid of memory the books you have read, and projected others for the good of mankind, while taking a walk from Charing Cross to Hyde-Park Corner;** and done it too as much at your ease as in the middle of your study?"

"Really, Madam, I cannot say that I have."

"No! Then I am mistaken in your character."

"Perhaps," rejoined Mr. Sardon with a smile, "the mistake is mutual; but I should be glad to know from what instance you do me the honour to infer me capable of such complete abstraction?"

"From no particular instance, but merely because such employment of the mind is common to every man of talents in walking the streets. *The dull man, indeed, goes straight forward; he observes if he meets with any of his acquaintance; he enquires respecting their health and their family; he glances at the shop windows, and sees shoe buckles and tea urns.* But a man of genius observes none of his acquaintance, makes no enquiries respecting their health or their families, looks at no shop-windows, nor sees either buckles or tea-urns, should they be ever so much in his way."

"Bravo!" cried Mr. Sardon; "What an excellent criterion by which to judge of genius! But did you not say something about laughing and crying?"

"Oh

* See Godwin's Enquirer.

‘ Oh yes,’ returned Bridgetina, ‘ I said the man of talent, in walking the street, gives full scope to his imagination. He laughs and cries. *Undebted to the suggestions of surrounding objects, his whole soul is employed. In imagination he declaims or describes ; impressed with the deepest sympathy, or elevated to the loftiest rapture.*’*

Mr. Sardon was astonished at the fluency of her expression. He began to consider her as a very extraordinary character, and willing to pursue the conversation, expressed himself highly satisfied with her very accurate delineation of the different ways in which a dull man and a man of genius employed themselves while walking the streets. He then begged to know how they were to be distinguished in the country. Here, alas, Bridgetina was soon run aground. She had gone to the very end of her lesson ; and was running away from the subject in a very unaccountable manner, when it was taken up by a lady near her, who had attentively listened to the conversation.

‘ I know not how to account for it,’ said Mrs. Mortimer, ‘ but I have generally remarked that men of distinguished talents, who have always resided in the country, seldom deign to be agreeable in conversation ; while in town, one daily meets with men of the first-rate abilities, who seem so totally unconscious of their own superiority, that one is neither pained by their reserve, nor mortified by their condescension.’

“ You do not consider, my dear Madam,” said Mr. Sardon, “ that the value of a commodity rises in proportion to its scarcity. The greatest scholar in the parish is too extraordinary a personage to demean himself after a common manner. When

* See Enquirer.

he deigns to speak, every word is a law, and every sentence the *ipse dixit* of infallibility. And would you expect such a sage as this to descend to chit-chat with a lady?"

'Oh, it is when he *descends*, that he offends me most,' rejoined Mrs. Mortimer. 'I could bear the most pompous display of his learning far better than the arrogance of his stupid and affected reserve, or the conceited air with which he lets himself down to the level of a female understanding.'

"The observation of Mrs. Mortimer (severe as it is) may, perhaps, be often applicable to mere scholars," said Mrs. Fielding; "but I believe it will seldom be found deserved by men of refined taste, or real genius, however remote their situation. The cultivation of taste bestows a polish upon the mind, that seldom fails to form the manners to urbanity; but upon the whole, I must allow, that men of superior talents or information are generally much improved by mutual collision."

'I never mind the learned bears, for my share,' said a young lady who sat by Bridgetina. 'What I detest in the country is, the coterie of censorious old maids, established in every little town, who are everlastingly making their ill-natured remarks upon all that passes.'

"Permit me to rectify your mistake," said Bridgetina; "and to inform you, that the censure of which you complain is the very perfection of human reason; and the persons who exercise it are the enlightened friends of the human race. When laws are abrogated and governments dissolved, these old maids, whose censures are, from the depraved state of a distempered civilization, rendered unpalatable to a multitude of the present

present race of mankind, will keep the whole world in a moral dependence upon reason. Nor will old maids be then permitted to make a monopoly of censoriousness. A censure will then be exercised by every individual over the actions of his neighbour; a promptness to enquire into and judge them, will then be universal;* and every man will enjoy the advantage of deriving every possible assistance for correcting and moulding his conduct, by the perspicacity not of a few solitary old maids only, but of all his neighbours. Oh, happy time! Oh, blessed ærea of felicity!"

'Oh wise, judicious, and enlightened maidens!' cried Mr. Sardon, 'who have given the world such convincing proofs of the efficacy of censure, as have enabled the philosopher to make an estimate of its value! How greatly are mankind indebted to the accuracy of your observations, and the curious minuteness of your research!'

'Though Mr. Sardon spake this in a tone sufficiently ironical, Bridgetina, totally unconscious of the irony, was much delighted with having such a champion to support her; and was taxing her memory for another harangue, when looking up, she observed Henry Sydney slipping out of the room.

"Doctor Sydney, Doctor Sydney," cried she, out of breath with terror and perturbation, "you do not, I hope, intend to go away?"

'I am obliged to go, Madam;' returned Henry, still receding.

"What! leave me without one tender interchange of congenial sentiment! without giving me an opportunity of disburthening my full heart

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* See Pol. Jus. vol. ii.

heart of one of the many thousand, thousand things I had to say!"

"If you leave your address, I shall do myself the honour of waiting on you before you leave town;" said Henry, hastily opening the door, and making his retreat as quickly as possible.

"Before I leave town!" repeated Bridgetina, following him to the head of the stairs. "And is this like your protestations of affection? Is this conduct in unison with the ardour of your declaration of fervid love?"

Henry had reached the first landing-place, but at these words he turned. 'Miss Botherim,' said he rather sternly, 'this is not the first time that you have seemed to make a point of teizing me. I must now, once for all, desire to know what your extraordinary conduct means?'

"Ah! Henry, too charming Henry, it is your conduct that is extraordinary; mine is the natural result of deep investigation, and the true principles of morals. Though you had never disclosed your passion, I should have followed you to town all the same; I——"

'Heavens! Miss Botherim, what is it you mean?' exclaimed Henry, who now saw with horror the mistake into which he had been betrayed. 'You follow me to London, and follow me on pretence of my having disclosed a passion for you! A passion for *you*, Miss Botherim; I really have not patience for any thing so absurd.'

"And can you deny all that you said at our last tender interview at the farm? What is become of that charming morbid excess of sensibility and tenderness, with which you then confessed the fervour of your fierce consuming flame? Oh, how greedily I absorbed the delicious poison

son that flowed from the soft tongue of tender love ! Oh !——”

‘ Miss Botherim, this is really too ridiculous. I well remember when we last met, that I was weak enough to suffer myself to be led into a confession of my attachment, not for you indeed, but for one with whose sentiments you pretended to be intimately acquainted. It is impossible, utterly impossible that you could apply any thing I then said to yourself. The supposition is too injurious to your understanding. Why then pursue me in this manner ? Why persist in tormenting me ?’

“ And is it, then, not with me that you are in love after all ? How can I believe it *compatible with the nature of mind, that so many strong and reiterated efforts have produced no effect ?* Is it possible that you can intend to leave me a comfortless, solitary, shivering wanderer, in the dreary wilderness of human society ? Ah ! cruel Henry !”

‘ Really, Madam, if you take my advice, you will not long remain in the wilderness of London. You shall have my hearty wishes for your good journey back to the country. Pray shall I now desire Mrs. Fielding’s footman to call a coach to take you home to your lodgings ?’ Without waiting for her permission, he instantly called the footman, and telling him to conduct Miss Botherim into the parlour till he could fetch her a coach, he hurried off in spite of her earnest entreaties to prolong the conference. It was fortunate for Bridgetina that Henry had presence of mind enough to prevent her return to the drawing-room, where she certainly would have done her utmost to expose both herself and him.

She no sooner heard the hall-door shut upon Henry than she threw herself into a chair, and to use her own expression, gave a vent to the high-wrought frenzied emotions of her troubled spirit. She bitterly bemoaned her unparalleled misfortunes, to which she applied every epithet in the vocabulary of sentimental misery, and was still struggling with the full tide of melancholy emotions, when the servant returned with the coach, "Tell Mrs. Fielding," said she to the footman, as he attended her to the coach; "tell her that I shall see her to-morrow, when I will repose my sorrows in her friendly bosom."

'Did you drop your bosom-friend, Ma'am?' said the footman, who thought he had not rightly heard her. 'Give me leave to fetch it.'

"Ah! you cannot fetch him!" said Bridgetina, heaving a deep sigh; "he will not come for you; he is hard and impenetrable as the marble rock; but I shall find a way to soften the obduracy of his flinty heart!"

The footman stood aghast; and when she told the coachman to drive to Charing-Cross, 'Better drive to Bedlam, I think!' exclaimed he; 'for sure I am, many honest souls are put in there not half so mad!'

CHAP. VII.

HENRY Sydney, extremely anxious to exculpate himself to Mrs. Fielding from having any concern in the intrusion of Miss Botherim, impatiently hurried through the business of the morning, and presented himself at Hanover-square before three o'clock.

“Your

"Your coming is very apropos," said Mrs. Fielding, "as I was just going to send for you. But, bless me! how very much fatigued you look; from your appearance one might suppose you had not been in bed since I saw you last."

"I must own I have had a sleepless night, though I was in bed the usual time," replied Henry; "but as I have, since leaving it, paid my respects to half the governors of the hospital, and been as far as Hackney and Homerton to deliver letters of introduction, my jaded appearance may be well accounted for. I should, indeed, have gone home to dress before I did myself the pleasure of waiting on you, had I not been impatient to make some apology for the extraordinary visit of Miss Botherin."

"It was on this very account I wished to see you," returned Mrs. Fielding. "She has been with me half the morning, and I must confess has not a little surprised me by what she has communicated."

"I know not what she has communicated to you, Madam," said Henry; "but I know I never was more astonished in my life than at her appearance; and, indeed, can neither account for that nor any part of her behaviour in any other way, than by supposing a degree of mental derangement."

"If it be madness, yet there is method in it," rejoined the lady. "Bizarre as she evidently is, and ridiculous as many of her notions appear to me, I must acknowledge, that if the account she this morning gave me of your conduct be founded in truth, you appear to me to have acted in a very indefensible manner."

"It wounds me to the soul to find that you, Madam, can believe me capable of acting in a reprehensible

prehensible manner in any instance ; but with regard to Miss Botherim I solemnly assure you—'

" I need no assurances as to your intentions, Dr. Sydney ; I can readily believe that you never meant any that were serious with regard to Miss Botherim, but I fear—I fear you are not to be so easily acquitted of the crime of amusing yourself with her credulity : a crime, which, however light and trifling it may appear, is in reality the very height of cruelty and injustice."

" Believe me, it is a conduct I have ever reprobated. You, Madam, cannot hold it in more abhorrence than I do. But had I even been inclined to practise it, Miss Botherim is the last woman in the world whom I should have thought of for furnishing amusement in any way.'

" You may certainly think I have no right to catechise you ; but you must pardon me for putting you in mind of the last conversation you had with her before you left the country. Am I to believe that what she told me was all her invention ?"

Henry coloured, hesitated, took up Mrs. Fielding's work-bag, examined the embroidery, opened, and then drew the strings ; opened, and drew them again ; then hastily throwing it aside, I can give you no answer, Ma'am, that will not convict me of folly, credulity, and presumption. Yet as I would rather bear the imputation of weakness, than be thought capable of the conduct Miss Botherim has ascribed to me, I shall frankly confess to you, that I suffered myself to be betrayed by her into a mistake which—which——'

" I perceive that the subject grows painful to you, and should be very sorry to distress you. I shall only, before we call another, beg leave to assure you, that it was not with a view to gratify
an

an idle and impertinent curiosity that I introduced it. I am truly sorry for the dilemma into which you have drawn yourself; and in spite of her folly, cannot help being sorry for the poor girl, who is, indeed, likely to be the greatest sufferer. I hope, however, you have not gone so far as to wound your honour by retracting."

"You, if you please, Madam, shall yourself be judge — I have scarcely ever met with Miss Botherim since my return to W——, without receiving some obscure hint of her knowledge of the situation of my heart. "The galled deer winces," and I shall not conceal from you, that I could not deny the justice of her suspicions. I frequently met the lovely girl, who ever has, and ever will be the sole object of my affections, in her company. And, though I cautiously endeavoured to conceal my heart-felt preference, found I had not done it so effectually as to escape the penetration of Miss Botherim. I contrived to parry her attacks upon the subject of my passion, till the day before I left W——; when, on hearing of my design of coming to London, she so roundly taxed me with cruelty in leaving one who was deservedly dear to me, in a state of suspense, that she extorted from me an avowal of my love, and a detail of the reasons that had hitherto sealed my lips upon the subject."

"But how could Miss Botherim take this to herself?"

"As to that, Madam, Miss Botherim alone can tell. Happily the conversation passed in the presence of a third person, who, I make no doubt, will exculpate me from saying a word to Miss Botherim, that credulity itself could construe into any thing beyond bare civility. My weakness, in having been duped into believing her the confidante

dante of a woman of uncommon sense and penetration, it is not such an easy matter to vindicate.'

"That I may not be led into a similar mistake with poor Miss Botherim," said Mrs. Fielding, smiling, "I must beg to know the lady's name who is likely to be the innocent cause of so much mischief."

'Oh, that I could have the honour of introducing her to you, not only by name but in person,' returned Henry. 'Young as she is, and inferior as she may be deemed in point of situation, I glory in the proud certainty that you would in her's acknowledge a kindred mind.'

"The greatest compliment that I have received these twenty years, without doubt;" replied Mrs. Fielding, bowing. "To be thought to have any resemblance to a young man's mistress, is an honour for which I cannot be too grateful. But you have not yet told me who this paragon is."

'Her name is, I believe, unknown to you. She is the rector of W——'s eldest daughter.'

"Daughter to Dr. Orwell?"

'Yes; the same.'

"I remember the Doctor well. He was only in deacon's orders at the time of my father's death, but had for three months done duty as his curate. He was a young man remarkable for piety and learning, and an excellent preacher; is he not?"

'Without appearing to aim at the graces of oratory, he possesses its essentials, and I believe was never heard with indifference. His sermons are of a piece with all his actions; they bear the sterling mark of sound wisdom, unaffected piety, and genuine benevolence.'

"What

“What fortune does he give to his daughter?”

‘His private fortune is, I believe, nothing; and his living (in order to avoid all disputes with his parishoners) he put it out of his power to raise. It is little more than three hundred a year; out of which he cannot be supposed to have saved much for his family.’

“And pray, Sir what right had you to fall in love with any lady without a fortune?”

‘Alas! no right. But how is it possible to shield the heart from the admiration of excellence? Conscious, however, that a knowledge of my affection could but serve to involve the object of it as a sharer in my distress, in case I should have the misfortune of passing any considerable length of time unestablished in my profession, I determined to keep the secret locked within my bosom, till a tolerable prospect of success should enable me to reveal it without the imputation of temerity or presumption.’

“Mighty heroic, to be sure! And pray, were your looks and actions equally well guarded as your lips?”

‘It is impossible for me to answer for them. In spite of my endeavours, perhaps, it was sometimes impossible to avoid betraying a preference so strongly felt.’

“And so you could play with this poor girl’s feelings; to gratify the inclination, or rather the vanity of the moment, you could excite her tenderness by a behaviour which might convince her of your decided partiality; and after having insidiously betrayed the affections of a grateful heart, you can satisfy your conscience, because, forsooth, you never spoke of love! Oh, Brutus is an honourable man!” So are ye all—all honourable men!”

Henry

Henry looked somewhat embarrassed. After a short pause, he resumed the conversation. "If I had not preferred her happiness to my own," said he "I should certainly not have left W—— without endeavouring to engage her hand. But in my situation, what right had I to do so?"

"Then, my good friend, you had surely no right to behave in such a manner, as to give her reason to believe herself mistress of your affections. Looks and actions are frequently as unequivocal as words. Where they are known, and intended to be so, I do not see why in honour they ought not to be deemed as binding."

"With pleasure should; I ratify every engagement mine have ever made; but, alas! far from having any reason to conclude that my attentions have made any impression on her heart, I have now much cause to fear that she will never listen to my vows."

"Have you ever made the experiment?"

"In the belief that to Miss Botherim she had confessed some sentiments in my favour, (for so, fool that I was, did I construe what fell from that bundle of absurdity) I flew to Harriet, with a full intention of laying open to her my whole heart. She received me with her usual sweetness; but when I would have talked of love, she absolutely refused to hear me, and having called her father, left me with a cold assurance of her continued friendship."

"And pray, if she had listened to you, what would have been the consequence? Years may elapse, before your profession enables you to maintain a wife in a stile of common decency. If you think of marrying till you are at least in possession of a clear five hundred a year—I cannot help being your relation—but remember, you
are

are no longer to reckon me in the number of your friends."

The solemn and positive manner in which Mrs. Fielding pronounced these words, seemed to prohibit all reply. Henry deeply sighed, and was silent. After a short pause, Mrs. Fielding, resuming her usual tone of affability, again reverted to the subject of Miss Botherim, in which she had not far proceeded, when the entrance of some visitors put a stop to the conversation, and gave Henry an opportunity of retiring. He immediately proceeded to his lodgings, which he entered with a heavy heart. He was so wrapt in thought, that it was a considerable time ere he perceived that two letters lay for him upon the table. One was directed by his sister's hand; with the other he was unacquainted. He gave the preference to the former, precipitately broke the seal, and read as follows.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

" Is there in human form that wears a heart,
 " A wretch, a villain, lost to love and truth,
 " That can with study'd, fly, ensnaring art
 " Betray sweet Julia's unsuspecting youth?
 " Curse on his perjur'd arts! dissembling, smooth!
 " Are honour, virtue, conscience, all exil'd?
 " Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
 " Points to the parents, fondling o'er their child,
 " Then paints the ruin'd maid, and their distraction wild!"
BURNS.

" To Henry Sydney, M. D.

" MY DEAREST BROTHER,

" SURELY the post was this morning much
 longer coming in than usual. I thought it never
 would have arrived. The long-wished-for sound
 of the little urchin's horn no sooner gave notice
 of his approach, than I threw on my shawl, and
 flew down to the post-office to demand the ex-
 pected letter. I might as well have staid at
 home; for the bag could not be unsealed till the
 post-master had made an end of dipping. I was al-
 most suffocated with the steams, but there in the
 little box cribbed from a corner of the tallow-
 chandler's shop, and dignified with the name of
Post-Office, did I stand for half an hour, till the
 master of the ceremonies, begreased from head
 to foot, appeared. Nasty as he was, I believe I
 could have kissed him for my letter if he had
 given it me immediately; but quite insensible to
 my impatience, there did the wretch stand taking
 out letter by letter, spelling and putting together
the

the names on every stupid scrawl, till at length, and at the very bottom of the bag, he pulled out your epistle in his dirty paw.

“That’s mine!” cried I; “that’s my brother’s letter!”

‘Stay, Miss, till I read the direction;’ said he, wiping his spectacles with the most provoking composure. ‘To Miss—Miss, Sydney—Sydney; aye, I believe it is your’s.’

“I threw down the postage, snatched it from his hand, and hastily ran over the contents. Then, returning to my father, I enjoyed the sweetest of all pleasures—that of talking of the dearest object of my affection to one to whom the subject is no less grateful, no less interesting, than to myself.

“I hope we are not too sanguine with regard to your prospects, when we pronounce them more than tolerable; but upon this subject your father intends to write you more at large; and to him I shall leave the ample discussion of your plans, contenting myself with hearty wishes and ardent prayers for their success—Happy am I in the heart-felt assurance that it is not in the power of time or absence, of prosperity or adversity, no, not even of that general damper of brotherly affection—a wife, to deprive me of the place I hold in my dearest brother’s love.

“Apropos, of a wife. You cannot imagine how I have been alarmed by this strange unaccountable girl, Miss Botherin, who yesterday evening very gravely assured me you had paid your addresses to her. I at first thought she was only in jest, but she continued to insist upon it so seriously, that I confess she made me very uneasy. I went to Harriet Orwell, to consult her upon the subject, and was indeed much relieved
by

by her endearing sympathy. She felt for me as if the case had been her own. Indeed, if you had been her own brother, she could not have been more affected. But what friend must not have felt concern at the thoughts of your throwing yourself away? Forgive me, but I really am not yet quite easy on the subject, and beg you will give me a full explanation of it in your next. I am called down to Harriet, who comes to take me out, so must bid you adieu till to-morrow; when, in the language of novelists, I shall resume my pen.

"I do not wait for to-morrow. I cannot. My heart is too full. And as I know my spirits are at present too much agitated to permit me to sleep, I shall try if by writing I cannot weary them into a state of greater tranquillity.

"O Henry, what a scene have I just now witnessed! Poor Captain Delmond! you may imagine better than I can describe the agony of his soul, when I tell you that he has lost his daughter! Yes, poor Julia is, as I greatly fear, lost to herself and to her friends for ever.

"On going down to Harriet Orwell, I found she wished me to accompany her to the farm to enquire for Julia; we immediately set out, but had not advanced many steps when we were met by Mrs. Gubbles, who informed us that Julia was expected home; and that it was indeed probable she might already have arrived at her father's. We then thought it proper to change our route, and turned down to Capt. Delmond's. The Captain heard our voices in the hall, and sent down old Quinten to beg us to walk up to the dining-room, where we found him sitting in his wheeled chair, giving directions to the servants

vants about placing a new sofa which had been just brought home, intended, as he told us, for the accommodation of Julia. 'The dear girl may, perhaps, be fatigued from her little journey,' said the fond and anxious father; 'and she may here repose herself without depriving us of the pleasure of her company.' He then made us walk into his dressing room, which you know looks into the garden; there a field bed had been put up for Julia, to save her the trouble of going up and down stairs; and of that, and all the other little arrangements made for her reception, we were obliged to give our opinion, and highly did we delight him by our approbation. Mrs. Delmond was then out at market; she was to go for Julia after dinner, when the Captain intreated we would return to him, and by our presence add to the pleasure poor Julia could not fail to experience, in returning home after so long and melancholy an absence.

"We did not hesitate to accept of the old gentleman's invitation, and went a little after five o'clock. With the Captain we found young Mr. Churchill, in whose carriage Mrs. Delmond was gone for Julia. He appeared little less interested than the Captain in the return of the fair invalid, and listened with no less assiduity for the signal of her approach. At length Quinten opened the dining-room door with a joyful countenance. "The carriage is coming, sir; I see it; 'tis turned the corner of Job's field, and will be here in a minute." Capt. Delmond was in the middle of a sentence but could not proceed. He clasped his hands and listened, looking towards the window with an earnestness of expectation and pleasure, that it is impossible to describe. The carriage rattled along the pavement. 'They should

should not drive so quick,' cried the Captain; 'they will shake the poor girl to pieces.'

"Mr. Churchill flew down stairs, as the carriage drove up to the door. Harriet followed him; I too involuntarily arose, but on a moment's reflection, returned to the Captain, whom I thought it would be cruel in us all to leave, and resumed my seat beside him. The dining-room door was left open, so that we could distinctly hear all that passed below.

"The first sound that reached our ears was the voice of old Quinten, exclaiming in the most melancholy accent, "Good God! what is become of my young mistress? Where is Miss Julia? Why is she not returned?"

"Captain Delmond sunk back in his chair. 'Oh! they have deceived me! cried he, in the most sorrowful voice; 'my dear girl is not well enough to come home. Alas! I see she has been worse—much worse than they ever told me!'

"I would have assured him he was mistaken, but my attention was attracted by the voice of Mrs. Delmond. What she said was too much broken by sobs to be distinctly heard. I trembled with apprehension and anxiety, but could not leave the unhappy father in order to satisfy myself. He pulled the bell again and again, but no one answered. It seemed as if every one was afraid of approaching him; too sure a proof of how unwelcome were the tidings they so much dreaded to announce. At length Quinten appeared; but oh, how altered was the expression of the old man's countenance! When he attempted to speak, his pale lips quivered with a sort of convulsive motion, and the big drops chased each other down his weather-beaten cheeks.

'On

‘On your peril let me know the worst!’ said Captain Delmond, in a voice scarcely articulate. ‘Is Julia ill? Is she dying?’

“Oh, no, thank God! she is not ill; but—but—she is gone off!”

‘Gone off! How? Where? With whom?’

“Gone off to London, I suppose,” returned Quinten; “with a sweetheart, ’tis most likely. Heavens grant he may be made of true stuff; and then all may be well again, please your Honour, soon.”

“Captain Delmond raised his hands and eyes to heaven, and threw himself back into the chair in speechless agony. Quinten proceeded: “Don’t let your Honour take it so to heart. Miss is indeed gone off without leave; but what then? If she has done half as well as your lady her mother did, when she ran off with your Honour, no one need pity her.”

“Captain Delmond took no notice of what he said; he did not even seem to hear him, but hastily enquired why he did not see his wife? Quinten then confessed, that his mistress was so ill as to be obliged to be carried into the parlour. Leaving Quinten with his master, I then ran down stairs to enquire after Mrs. Delmond; who, as I entered the front parlour, was just recovering from a violent hysterical fit. She was sensible only for a few minutes, when she relapsed into another more severe, and of longer duration than the former. Had it not been for the judicious and well-directed endeavours of the dear sensible Harriet, I question whether it might not have been nearly fatal. Soon as I beheld her open her eyes, I flew back to Captain Delmond, to inform him of her recovery. ‘You are very good, my dear,’ he said in a sort of hollow voice; ‘you,

‘you, I hope, will never be the murderer of him who gave you being.’

“Tears now for the first time found their way to the afflicted father’s eyes; he wept bitterly. I stood in silence by his side; for what comfort had I to offer him? Could I desire him not to feel the wound that pierced his soul? Could I palliate the offence of her who had fixed the keen dart of anguish in a father’s heart? Impossible! The attempt would have been impertinent as vain. I thought it best to let the first strong emotion have free course, and out of respect to his feelings, I after a little time again went down to Mrs. Delmond. While I was on the last stairs, a heavy sigh from the back parlour attracted my attention. I then for the first time recollected Mr. Churchill, and on opening the parlour door, I there found him sitting; his elbows resting upon the table, and his clasped hands supporting his forehead. I stood for a minute before he observed me; and when he looked up, “Mr. Churchill,” said I, without seeming to notice his confusion, “in what distress has this rash step of Julia’s involved this unhappy family! Poor Captain Delmond! I do not think he will ever get the better of it.”

‘What a wretch I am,’ cried he, ‘in such a case to think only of myself! I will go to Captain Delmond. But what can I say to comfort him? Is not Julia gone? Is she not the prey of a villain? Ah! Julia, it is not my happiness alone that thou hast destroyed; thine, thine too, is gone for ever! Heaven knows with what care I should have cherished it. Oh, Miss Sydney, you know not how dear this charming creature was to my heart! For her alone I prized this accession of fortune, that is now become to me a vile thing,
of

of no earthly use. For her—but you will scorn me for this weakness—let me go to her father.’ So saying, he passed me, and with slow steps proceeded to the dining-room, while I went to Mrs. Delmond.

“I found her better, but she did not speak till after some time, when Quinten came down to beg, that as soon as she was able she might go up stairs to his master. “What will become of me!” said she; “oh, Miss Orwell, how shall I meet my poor husband! How shall I tell him the particulars of this sad affair!” She then threw herself on Harriet’s neck, and wept in such a manner, that I feared she would have relapsed into another fit. Indeed, I never should have believed that Mrs. Delmond could have felt so strongly on any occasion whatever. But I see there are wounds which the most apathetic must feel; sorrows which touch the bosom of the most insensible.

“We would have had her to go up alone, but she insisted upon our accompanying her. When we entered the dining-room, your friend Churchill, pale and agitated, was leaning on the Captain’s chair, in vain endeavouring to conceal the emotion that swelled his heart. Captain Delmond attempted to speak, but his voice was choaked, and the words died away upon his lips; he held out his hand to his wife; who bathed it with her tears; we made her sit down beside him; but a considerable time elapsed before either could find utterance to the sensations that oppressed their souls.

“At length Captain Delmond begged to have a minute detail of all the circumstances concerning the event they so much deplored; and Mrs. Delmond, composing herself as much as possible, proceeded

proceeded to relate, 'that the last time she had been to see Julia, she was surprised to find that fellow Vallaton with her.'

"Vallaton!" exclaimed Capt. Delmond; "Is it then that villain, that infernal villain, who has seduced my child! A married man, too! O distraction!—If there be vengeance in heaven, it will strike him—proceed no further. I cannot bear it. My heart-strings are cracked already." He heaved a convulsive groan, and I actually thought would have instantly expired. We with difficulty prevailed on him to taste of some cordial, which having a little revived him, he desired Mrs. Delmond to proceed.

"She related, that at the time above-mentioned she thought the behaviour of Julia extremely flighty and odd; but that considering Vallaton in the light of a married man, she entertained not the least suspicion of him; though now that she looked back upon all that passed, she wondered at herself for being so very blind. 'But how could I imagine,' cried she, 'that such a girl as Julia, so virtuous, so modest as she has ever been, so far from any forwardness or levity, should yet be capable of such vile wickedness? Oh, that I had died before she saw the light! Little did I think, that she, who was the pride of my heart, should live to become a curse to her that bore her!'

"Here poor Mrs. Delmond was again obliged to stop; and Julia's maid Nancy having come into the room, I took the liberty of hinting to Captain Delmond that the particulars he wanted might be learned of her, without putting Mrs. Delmond to the pain of recital.

"She accordingly was called, and briefly stated, that Mr. Vallaton, (who had, ever since
Miss

Miss Botherim was with Julia, been her daily visitor) came in a post-chaise at nine that morning, and on stepping out, told her (Nancy) that he was come to fetch Miss Delmond home. He asked if her clothes were packed? She told him no; for that Mrs. Delmond had informed her Miss was not to be sent for till the afternoon; but that she could put them up in a quarter of an hour. He desired her to make haste, and then went into the parlour to Miss Delmond, who was dressed, and ready for breakfast. She took in the tea-kettle some minutes after, and observed her young mistress in tears. Mr. Vallaton was speaking to her in a low voice, as if soothing her (or, in Nancy's own words, coaxing her) to do something she did not quite approve. She could not distinctly hear all that he said, but the words *general utility*, *right reason*, and *true philosophy*, frequently met her ear; and once, in answer to something that Julia seemed to urge concerning her father, Mr. Vallaton expressed his wonder that she had not got the better of such *foolish prejudices*. Then turning to Nancy he again bade her make haste, and put nothing up at present but Miss Delmond's clothes, as every thing else would be sent for afterwards. When all was ready, he took Julia's hand to lead her to the carriage, but she had not advanced many steps, when she grew sick, and was obliged to have hartshorn and water twice before she could proceed; at length Vallaton took her up in his arms, and lifted her in, jumping in after her; he desired Nancy to follow, and they drove off.

“To her great surprise, when they came to the cross, instead of going on to W—, they turned into the London road. Julia then wept violently, and Vallaton, (the villain!) putting his

arm round her waist, spoke to her in a low and soothing voice; he spoke in French, so that Nancy knew not what he said. When they arrived at —, he told Julia she need not leave the carriage, as fresh horses were ready to be put to it immediately, and that he should speak to the landlord to take care of Nancy till the arrival of the stage-coach, when she should be taken back to the farm.

“And is my mistress not to go back to W——?” cried the poor girl, in an agony of grief. “Oh, do not let me leave you, my dear young lady. Pray take me with you; I will attend you wherever you go, and I will go with you to the very world’s end, if you will but permit me to serve you.”

“Julia leaning over her to Vallaton, who had by this time stepped out of the carriage, ‘Do, my good friend,’ said she, (while the tears fell from her eyes) ‘do permit her to go with us—pray do. I shall want her assistance, and should be glad to have her with me. It would be a comfort to me—indeed it would.’

“I tell you, my love,” returned the wretch, “it is impossible; there are a thousand reasons against it. Come,” said he, taking the girl’s hand, and pulling her out of the carriage, “you only teize your mistress by your prate.” Then dragging her into a parlour, he told her she must return to the farm by the stage-coach, and there wait the arrival of Mrs. Delmond, who would take her home in the evening.

“And what am I to say to my mistress?” cried Nancy. “How shall I look her in the face, after what has happened?”

“And what has happened?” returned the wretch fiercely. The rest of his speech was too much

much above Nancy's comprehension to enable her to detail it with exactness; she only knew it was about *the prejudices of society*, and that he called her master *an old licensed murderer*; and said, that 'it was Julia's duty to prefer his happiness to her father's, and that they were going to enlighten the world.'—Such was the substance of Nancy's narration, which received many interruptions from the cross questions and bitter exclamations of the heart-wounded parents.

"When she had finished, a silence of some minutes ensued, which was only interrupted by the deep sighs of Mrs. Delmond. The feelings of her husband seemed too acute for utterance; but in his countenance the agony of his soul was portrayed in colours stronger than imagination can paint, or it is in the power of words to describe. The recollection is engraven on every fibre of my heart; and when I attempt to sleep, (which I have done for some hours since I began this) the figure of the unhappy father swims before my eyes, and harrows up my soul.

"Mrs. Delmond, though she continued for the most part to weep in silence, could not forbear now and then to utter a reproachful exclamation against the ingratitude of Julia. "Good God! that she should suffer herself to become the prey of such a wretch, a low fellow whom nobody knows! a man who is not, perhaps, even in the rank of a gentleman!" These exclamations called forth a fearful burst of passion from the lips of Captain Delmond. 'Let not the villain think he shall escape my vengeance!' cried he, in a voice of frantic rage; 'I shall pursue the base-born scoundrel, I shall make him answer for his villainy! I—'

"The recollection of his own enfeebled and helpless state then rushed upon his mind, and crushed his spirit to despair; he sunk back in his chair and burst into a flood of tears.

"Churchill eagerly seized his hand. "Permit me, sir," cried he, "to pursue the villain, give me your authority, and be assured you shall have a speedy account of him."

"And I too!" cried Quinten, all panting with eagerness. "Permit me to attend his honour, and old as I am I may be of some service. I shall let him know what it is to call an honest soldier, that fights for his King and country, a licensed murderer. The cowardly thief! the sneaking, smooth-tongued scoundrel! He must have dealt with the devil to bewitch my dear young lady; so wise as she was, and so dutiful!"

"Mr. Churchill again urged his request, and taking the emphatic squeeze which Captain Delmond gave his hand for a token of approbation, he flew down stairs, mounted his servant's horse, and ordering him to follow on one from the carriage, he rode off before any plan had been concerted for the conduct of his enterprize. Pray heaven he may not suffer from the generous forwardness of his gallant spirit!

"Oh, Julia, how have you thrown away your happiness! In the affections of Charles Churchill you might have been blessed indeed! But poor, infatuated girl! what store of misery have you not prepared for yourself? When an awakened conscience tells you what you have inflicted on the authors of your being; when the remembrance of their thousand, thousand tender offices, their fond anxieties, their never-ceasing cares of love, shall tinge with deeper hue your black ingratitude, how must it sting your soul!

"Alas,

" Alas, Henry, while young, we little think —

" How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is,

" To have a thankless child !"

But what shall we say to this sort of philosophy, which builds the fabric of morals on a direliction of all the principles of natural affection, which cuts the ties of gratitude, and pretends to extend our benevolence by annihilating the sweet bonds of domestic attachment ? Should this system prevail,—“ Relations dear, and all the charities of father, son, and brother,” would soon be no longer known. O for the spear of Ithuriel, whose potent touch made the lurking fiend appear in his proper shape, when, as I suppose, in the form of false philosophy, he attempts to insil into the heart of Mother Eve—

“ Distemper'd discontented thoughts,

“ Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,

“ Blown up with high conceits engend'ring pride.”

“ May we, my dear brother, never suffer ourselves to be seduced from the plain path of piety and peace: may the blessing of our heavenly Father knit the bonds of our affection on earth, and at length re-unite us a family of love in heaven !

Adieu ! Your's most sincerely,

MARIA SYDNEY.”

“ P.S. I have just heard that Miss Botherim has likewise gone off to London. Surely, Harry --but it is impossible—you can have no interest in her. Yet I cannot help being very much disturbed by this intelligence. For heaven's sake, write immediately. I hope in God you can clear yourself ; if not, O Harry, how miserable ! but I can-

not, will not suppose it. Poor Mrs. Botherim is quite beside herself. Captain Delmond too is, I hear to-day very ill. The gout is flown into his stomach, and the symptoms appear dangerous. Should he die, what must be the feelings of Julia! Your father will write to-morrow. He and Dr. Orwell have both been with Captain Delmond all the morning.—Once more adieu!”

Henry did not read his sister's letter without experiencing a considerable degree of emotion. Hoping the other might give him some further information on the subject that had employed his sister's pen, he hastily opened it, and casting his eye to the end, saw the name of Bridgetina Botherim. He pronounced an emphatic *phoh!* and threw it down; but recollecting that she might possibly know something of the elopement of Julia, in whose fate he was most sincerely interested, he again took it up, and read as follows:

“YOU tell me I have no share in your affection. You even hint that you love another; but you are mistaken if you think this makes any alteration in the decided part I have taken. No:—I have reasoned, I have investigated, I have philosophised upon the subject; and am more than ever determined to persevere in my attacks upon your heart. The desire of being beloved, of inspiring sympathy, is congenial to the human mind. I will inspire sympathy; nor can I believe it compatible with the nature of mind, that so many strong and reiterated efforts should be made in vain. *Man does right in pursuing interest and pleasure. It argues no depravity. This is the fable of super-*

*superstition.** My interest, my pleasure, is all centered in your affections; therefore I will pursue you, nor shall I give over the pursuit, say what you will. I know the power of argument, and that in the end the force of reason must prevail. Why should I despair of arguing you into love? Do I want energy? Am I deficient in eloquence? —No. On you, therefore, beloved, and ah! too cruel Henry, on you shall all my energy and all my eloquence be exerted; and I make no doubt that in the end my perseverance shall be crowned with success. It is your mind I wish to conquer, and mind must yield to mind. Can the mind of my rival be compared with mine? Can she energize as I do? Does she discuss? Does she argue? Does she investigate with my powers? You cannot say so; and therefore it plainly follows she is less worthy of your love.

“The apprehension of embarrassment with regard to fortune may be another obstacle that you may haply start. But this, likewise, I can obviate. Read the inclosed; and you will perceive that there is a scheme on foot, which will accelerate the progress of happiness and philosophy through the remotest regions of the habitable globe. Fly this dismal, dirty hogstye of depraved and corrupt civilization; and let us join ourselves to the enlightened race, who already possess all those essentials which philosophy teaches us to expect in the full meridian of the Age of Reason. Let us, my Henry, in the bosom of this happy people, who worship no God, who are free from the restraint of laws and forms of government, enjoy the blessings of equality and love. You will not then need to ‘look blank and disconsolate when you

* See Emma Courtney.

hear of the health of your friends.' 'Pain, sickness, and anguish, will not then be your harvest; nor will you then, as now, rejoice to hear that they have fallen on any of your acquaintance.* There are no physicians among the Hottentots.— There you shall enjoy the blessing of leisure; and the powers of your mind, not blunted by application to any particular science, shall germinate into general usefulness. Oh, happy time! and in that time happy, thrice happy, shall be your
BRIDGETINA BOTHERIM."

CHAP. IX.

— "His speech was an excellent piece
"Of patch-work, with shreds brought from Rome and from
Greece;
"But should poets and orators try him for theft,
"Like the jack-daw of old—would a feather be left?"
SIMKIN'S LETTERS.

THE admirable epistle of our thrice-admirable heroine, with which we thought it proper to conclude the last chapter, was left by her at Henry's lodgings, on her way to Mrs. Fielding's. On her return from Hanover-square, she, in pursuance of her adopted plan, went to look for lodgings in the same street in which Henry had taken up his abode. Her attempt was unsuccessful.

Not a house in George's-street would receive her.

Her

* See the Characteristics of a Physician, in the Enquirer.

Her attack upon the heart of Henry was from this unfavourable circumstance prevented from being turned into a blockade; but still she resolved to carry on the siege; and happily for her purposes, on turning by chance into Conduit-street, she found a lodging exactly suited to her wishes. She fixed upon the first-floor, and asked the price."

"Two guineas a week, Ma'am, is the very lowest at which these lodgings were ever let."

"Two guineas a week!" cried Bridgetina, in astonishment. "What! a hundred and four guineas a-year for two paltry rooms. You must be mistaken, good woman; I shall convince you that you are. In my mother's house at W——, for which she pays no more than twenty pounds a-year, there are seven better rooms than these! Do not think I am to be so easily imposed upon."

"If you can suit yourself cheaper elsewhere, I have no objection, Ma'am," returned the mistress of the house, drily; "but I believe," added she, "you will find few such lodgings at the price (considering the situation) in London."

The situation was indeed desirable; not that Bridgetina would in itself have considered it as preferable to Hound's-ditch, or even to any of the noble avenues of Wapping; but its being in the vicinity of Henry gave it a value beyond all price. Finding it in vain to argue the good woman out of any part of her demand, she closed with her terms, and told her she should take immediate possession of the apartments. Mrs. Benton curtsied, and after a little modest hesitation, informed Miss Botherim, that she made it a rule never to take any lodger without a reference for their character to some person of respectability.

“ Mrs. Benton, for that I think is your name, I perceive you are a very unenlightened person,” said Bridgetina. “ A regard to the character of any individual is one of the immoral prejudices of a distempered state of civilization. I shall soon instruct you better; and out of the choice writings of the most illustrious modern philosophers, convince you that there is no notion more erroneous than the false prejudice entertained against certain persons of *great powers*, who have happened to energize in a direction vulgarly called vicious. I, for my part, think it one of the peculiar advantages of this great metropolis, that it happily affords to the philosopher an opportunity of cultivating an intimacy with liberal-minded persons of this description; and shall be much obliged to you for an introduction to any heroine who has nobly sacrificed the bauble—reputation. Pray have you any acquaintance in this line ?”

Mrs. Benton stared—“ I really do not understand you, Ma’am. My acquaintances are all people of unspotted reputation. Nor, though my lodgings should stand empty throughout the year, would I admit any person of suspected character into my house. I do not mean to insinuate any reflection upon you, Ma’am; but you are a stranger to me, and therefore I must again request a reference.”

“ You are really strangely invulnerable to argument; but I hope I shall in time convince you of your mistake. Meanwhile you may apply to Mrs. Fielding, in Hanover-square, the only person I have yet visited in London; and as she is as much the slave of prejudice as yourself, her testimony will, I dare say, please you.”

“ Oh, Ma’am, if you visit Mrs. Fielding, I am more than satisfied. To be honoured with her acquaintance—

acquaintance is a sufficient recommendation to me. She is the best, the most generous of women! To her goodness I am indebted for every comfort that I now enjoy. I should be base, indeed, if I did not with gratitude acknowledge that she has been the saviour of me and mine."

"Gratitude is a mistaken notion, Mrs. Benton; and if you feel any extraordinary regard towards Mrs. Fielding, on account of her being your benefactress, you act in direct opposition to the principles of justice and virtue."

"What! Not feel gratitude to my benefactress! Not feel a regard for her who rescued my husband from a prison! Who, like a ministering angel, brought relief to our extreme necessity! Who saved my babes from perishing, and has put us in a situation to earn our bread with comfort and with credit! O, if ever I cease to bless her, may tenfold misery be my portion!"

"I perceive you have imbibed all the pernicious prejudices of superstition; but notwithstanding your mistaken notions, I dare say you are a good sort of woman at bottom; and so I shall tell Mrs. Fielding, when I go to breakfast with her to-morrow morning."

Mrs. Benton curtsied; and Bridgetina, desiring a coach to be called, stepped into it, and drove to the Golden-Cross for her things. Having paid her bill, and counted her remaining stock of cash, she found there was only one guinea and a half left; which having restored to her purse, she returned to Conduit-street, where she found her apartment diligently prepared by Mrs. Benton for her reception.

As she had not given any orders about dinner, Mrs. Benton naturally concluded it was her intention to dine abroad; while Bridgetina, never accustomed

customed to pay any attention to the affairs of life, and ignorant of all the manners and habits of society, had taken it for granted that food was to be included with her lodging. At five o'clock, finding she could energize no longer, she pulled the bell, to enquire whether dinner was ready.

‘Dinner! Ma’am?’ said the maid-servant who attended her; ‘I did not know that you were to have any. I received no directions to make market for you.’

“No!” returned Bridgetina; “I perceive, then, that your mistress has conceived too exalted an idea of my *powers*. In the present state of society, no one’s energies can be so effectually exerted as to elude the physical necessity of eating. I therefore desire to have my dinner immediately.”

The demand which followed for money to go to market, brought on an explanation by no means agreeable to Bridgetina, and which very little suited the state of her finances. After a learned expostulation on the part of our heroine, and a plain statement on that of Mrs. Benton, it was finally settled, that the maid should hereafter make provision for Bridgetina’s meals; which were to be fixed to no regular hour, but taken *philosophically*,* at what time the energies of her stomach required it.

“You will say it is more convenient for you, that I should dine at your table,” said Miss Botherim; “and probably quote the example of the Spartans, who, by a law of the immortal Lyncus, were obliged to common meals. But when the progress of mind shall have carried us further on the road to perfection, all co-operation in butchery, in cookery, or in eating, shall be at an

* See Pol. Inf. vol. ii. p. 492.

end.

end. If, at that happy period, the animal economy should still continue (notwithstanding the advanced state of society) to demand a supply of food, every man will then, when he is hungry, knock down an ox for himself, and cutting out his own steak, will dress and devour it at the time and place best suited to his avocation and circumstances. Do you think the Gonoquais sit down to table, as we do? No, no; social meals (as they are vulgarly called) are an interruption to the sublime flights of genius, and ought to be discountenanced by every true philosopher."

In this manner did Bridgetina endeavour to enlighten her humble and modest auditor; whose silence she interpreted into profound admiration of her extraordinary powers of eloquence, and on whose mind she firmly believed every word she spoke made a deep and lasting impression.

On the following morning, according to appointment, she attended Mrs. Fielding at breakfast; when, to her great mortification, instead of meeting with Henry, as she had fully expected, she received from his respectable friend a very warm expostulation on the impropriety of her conduct; which, though delivered with all possible gentleness of voice and manner, kindled in her mind the flame of deep resentment.

In vain did Mrs. Fielding endeavour to persuade her to return to W—. In vain did she urge the duty she owed her aged mother; the risque she ran of exposing her character to reproach, and her name to ridicule, by persisting in a conduct so utterly inconsistent with the laws of delicacy and decorum. Bridgetina was like the deaf adder, 'which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely.' Mrs. Fielding was the slave of prejudice; her mind was fettered by super-

superstition ; her morals were built upon the false structure of religious principle. She looked to a future world for that state of complete order, happiness, and perfection, which she weakly believed would never be found in this. She was not enlightened enough to conceive how the progress of mind could be accelerated by casting off all dependance on a Supreme Being, by contemning his power, or denying his existence ; but on the contrary, adored his goodness, revered his wisdom, and firmly believed in his revelation. How, then, could she fail to be the scorn of our deep and enlightened philosopher ! In truth, Bridgetina felt for her understanding the most sovereign contempt ; and after an harangue, which had too little of novelty in it to afford the reader any amusement, she took her leave of the weak and prejudiced Mrs. Fielding, fully resolved never more to honour a person so full of prejudices with her confidence.

Her next attempt was to obtain a conference with Henry. She was informed by his servant that he was not at home. Leaving her address, and desiring the man to tell his master that she should be at home all the evening, she stepped into a hackney-coach, and drove to the house of Sir Anthony Aldgate, in Mincing-lane.

Here, also, her evil stars seemed to preponderate. The knight, his lady, and daughter, were on a visit to Mr. Deputy Grikin, at his villa at Bow-Bridge, and were not expected home till the latter end of the week. This was very unwelcome intelligence to Bridgetina. Sir Anthony had been by her father's will appointed trustee for her fortune, which consisted of four thousand pounds stock in the four per cents, the whole of which was to continue under his management till the day
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of Bridgetina's marriage; with power, however, to sell, or change the security, (with her consent) as might appear most eligible.

It was her intention to raise an immediate supply of five hundred pounds for her own expences; and to put five hundred more into the hands of Mr. Vallaton, as treasurer for the Gonoquais emigrants, with a promise of doubling the sum, should the subscription of the philosophers appear inadequate to the expences of the expedition.

Great was her vexation at the delay occasioned by Sir Anthony's absence, which not only protracted the glory she expected to reap from the applauses of the enlightened, but reduced her to the mortification of remaining for several days with an empty purse. O cheerless companion of philosophy! too well do we know the torpedo effects of thy chilling aspect: too often have we experienced the sickening languor which the contemplation of thy long, lank sides occasions, to refuse our sympathy to the luckless wight who has thee for a guest! Thy casual appearance is a trifling evil, but where thy form is permanent, thou art

“ Abominable, unutterable, and worse

“ Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,

“ *Gorgons*, and *Hydras*, and *Cbimeras* dire.”

In all the calamities to which life is liable, there is no comfort equal to that which arises from being able to fix the blame upon that which has occasioned, or is supposed to have occasioned it. In the opinion of many wise men, it is one of the chief advantages of matrimony, that in every cross accident, a constant resource of this nature is provided for in the help-mate of the party aggrieved. Even the vexation arising from the loss of a game
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at cards is considerably alleviated by the privilege of finding fault with the play of a partner; so to Bridgetina was it no small consolation, that in her present perplexity she could relieve her mind by bitter invectives against the *distempered state of civilization*. Had it not been for the present depraved institutions of society, her father would not have had it in his power to make a will. She would not then have been fettered by the impertinent interference of this trustee; who had, indeed, by his management during her minority, considerably increased the capital of her little fortune, and thus, by adding to the wealth of an individual, had sinned against the glorious system of equality.

Her soliloquies upon this subject were not interrupted by any visitor. Henry did not appear; neither did he send any answer to her letter. She again wrote, but to no purpose. She repeatedly called at his lodgings, but still he was not at home. Another letter, conjuring him to enter into her arguments, and either reply to them on paper, or come to reason the subject with her in a personal interview, met with no better success than the former. Henry remained inexorable.

Mrs. Fielding had, at his request, informed Bridgetina, that as it was impossible for him to answer her but in a way that must appear harsh and disagreeable, he begged leave to decline writing. In musing on this subject, and investigating in her usual method the motives of Henry, and the conduct of his patroness, it all at once occurred to her that Mrs. Fielding herself was the object of Henry's pursuit; and that it was in order to get rid of a rival, that that lady had so strongly pressed her return to the country. The longer her imagination dwelt upon all the circumstances which had occurred, the more strongly was she impressed with

with the truth of her suspicions. The glaring disparity in point of age was in her mind no obstacle, neither did she make any account of that nice propriety of sentiment and of conduct which marked the character of Mrs. Fielding, and rendered her eminently superior to the suspicion of weakness or absurdity. That she was attached to Henry, she thought was evident; and that she should wish to marry him was not (in her opinion) at all extraordinary. She therefore determined to change her plan, and to exert all her energies to persuade Mrs. Fielding that she ought in justice to resign her pretensions to one, who, by her superior powers, was more eminently qualified to promote the happiness of a deserving individual. She would immediately have written, but apprehensive that Mrs. Fielding, following the example of Henry, would leave the letter unanswered, she thought it better to discuss the subject in a personal interview; and set out for Hanover-square with all possible expedition.

As she entered the square, Mrs. Fielding's carriage drove from her door; she however proceeded to knock, and had the door opened to her by a maid-servant, from whom she learned, that Mrs. Fielding was not expected home till near dinner-time.

“Would she be at home in the evening?”

“Yes; but in the evening she was to have a party.”

This intelligence was extremely agreeable to Bridgetina, as she doubted not that Henry would be of the number of Mrs. Fielding's guests, of whom she also determined to make one; nor did the want of an invitation appear to her any obstacle, as that was a mere matter of form, which she thought might very easily be dispensed with.

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It was now that Bridgetina for the first time felt the absence of her mother, who had from her cradle supplied the place to her of maid, milliner, and mantua-maker; and though the good woman's fond wishes of setting off the person of her daughter to the best advantage were but ill seconded by her taste, her officious zeal had rendered the object of her affections so unaccustomed to do any thing for herself, that she was helpless as a baby. Her only resource was to consult Mrs. Benton, whom she accordingly sent for; and after telling her she was to go that evening to a party at Mrs. Fielding's, intreated her assistance in the necessary preparations. Mrs. Benton very good-naturedly offered to do every thing in her power; and proposed sending immediately for a hair-dresser, as really she could not help observing that Miss Botherim's hair stood very much in need of cutting.

Bridgetina replied, that "all unnecessary co-operation was vicious, and that as Mrs. Benton and her maid had both offered their voluntary assistance, she would by no means purchase the service of a mercenary. Besides," added she, putting her hand to her forehead, and gently introducing her fingers betwixt her skull and the high frizzled locks that towered above, "my hair is much more easily dressed than you imagine. See, (cried she, taking off the wig) these curls want only a little combing, and then, as they are somewhat stiff, they must be well smoothed down with hard pomatum, and covered over with a little powder, and they will do very well."

Mrs. Benton shook her head, but desiring Jenny to take the comb, and proceed by Miss Botherim's directions, she went on to the examination of the wardrobe, which Bridgetina displayed for her inspection. Having laid aside two or three printed calicoes,

calicoes,' and as many ordinary muslins, she at length arrived at a dress carefully pinned up in a large table-cloth. "How very fortunate," said she, "that my mother should by mistake have sent me this favourite dress, in which she always says I look so well. It is made up after her own fancy, and admirably suited to my complexion. Do you not admire it?"

'Indeed, Ma'am, the silk is very pretty, to be sure, but only—now that silks are so little worn, I fear it will look a little particular. The colour, too, so deep a rose is rather glaring, and I fear it will be thought unfashionable.'

"Oh, as to the fear of being particular, I despise it. The gown has been very much admired at W——, and the fancy of trimming it with these knots of deep blue ribbons has been greatly praised."

'I do not doubt it; but you know, Ma'am, that in London—indeed, believe me that you had better go to Mrs. Fielding's in a plain muslin. I beg pardon for the liberty I take, but indeed I cannot help wishing you to consider, how odd such a dress as this will appear in a room full of company.'

The predilection of Bridgetina for her favourite gown was not to be moved by the remonstrances of Mrs. Benton, though they continued to be urged with encreasing vehemence till interrupted by Jenny, who declared the curls of the wig to be so intractable as to bid defiance to her utmost skill. Again Mrs. Benton hinted the necessity of procuring a hair-dresser; but as Bridgetina was obstinate in opposing it, she herself undertook to settle the inflexible tresses on one side of the wig, while Jenny tugged at the other. At length the labours of the toilette were concluded, and
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Our heroine, having refused to permit Jenny to call a coach, tripped it on foot through George's-street, and reached Mrs. Fielding's door at the moment some ladies, who had just stepped from a coroneted carriage, were entering it. She followed them without hesitation up stairs. The names of Lady Caroline and Lady Juliet Manners were announced aloud; and immediately after, that of Miss Botham was pronounced by the same sonorous voice. Mrs. Fielding started at the sound; she was still speaking to Lady Juliet at no great distance from the door, when it reached her ears. She instantly turned round, and in spite of her vexation, could scarcely forbear smiling at the strange appearance of the little *outré* figure that approached her.

"Bless me," cried a young lady who stood up to speak to Lady Caroline Manners, "What masquerade figure has your ladyship brought in with you? I did not hear of any fancy ball this evening?"

"She did not come with us," said Lady Caroline, "nor can I imagine who she is; but she is dressed in character sure enough, though I am positive there is no masquerade. I dare say she is some oddity, for you know Mrs. Fielding does sometimes pick up queer people."

Who is she? what can she be? where does she come from? reverberated twenty whispering voices at once. Some imagined her to be a foreigner, but of what nation no one could determine. Others sagaciously discovered it to be some one of their common acquaintance dressed up in disguise, and introduced by Mrs. Fielding for the amusement of the company; but the conclusion made by those best acquainted with Mrs. Fielding, and which in a short time became general,

general, was highly in Bridgetina's favour, as it supposed her some person of extraordinary talents, whose soaring genius was above conformity to the common fashions of the world.

Time does not permit us at present to controvert the false notion upon which this opinion is founded, otherwise we should not despair of being able satisfactorily to prove, that the affectation of singularity, so far from being a concomitant of real genius, is a certain proof of a confined and little mind. But without waiting to discuss this subject any farther, we return to Bridgetina, who, quite unconscious of the wonder her appearance excited, dressed her countenance in a gracious smile as she waddled up to Mrs. Fielding, who waited to be addressed by her without speaking.

"It was extremely fortunate that I heard you were to be at home this evening," said Bridgetina, after making her curtsy.

"I should have been extremely happy to have heard the same of you from W —," replied Mrs. Fielding, attempting to look serious.

"I do not doubt that," returned Bridgetina; "but I know your motives, and have come with a view to convince you that they are erroneous. I wish to have an opportunity of communing with you for half an hour or so in private, and shall wait your time."

"It cannot possibly be this evening," returned Mrs. Fielding, who hoped, by an absolute refusal, to prevail on her to depart; you see how I am engaged: I cannot have it in my power to speak to you for five minutes on any account whatever."

"Ah!" said Mr. Sardon, who at that moment entered the room, "see how the *power of sympathy* attracts me to the spot that contains Miss Botherim.

rim. You cannot think, Ma'am," continued he, addressing himself to Bridgetina, from whom Mrs. Fielding had turned to receive some other company, "You cannot think what a convert you have made of me. I have twice walked from Charing-Cross to Hyde-Park corner, without casting one glance on either shoe-buckles or tea-urns; and though I must confess I neither laughed nor cried, I have had some flights of fancy that I hope will entitle me to be ranked among your men of genius."

'I make no doubt of your powers, sir,' returned Bridgetina, gravely. 'You seem a man capable of estimating, and of energizing in no common degree.'

Mr. Sardon bowed. "The approbation of a lady of your penetration is too flattering. How much does Mrs. Fielding oblige her friends by introducing among them a person so rarely qualified! But pray, do you not intend to enlighten this brilliant circle by a lecture on metaphysics? You know no opportunity for instructing mankind ought to be lost; and I dare say there are many persons here present to whom your arguments would be strikingly original."

Mrs. Fielding, who overheard the latter part of Mr. Sardon's speech, here interposed. "Miss Botherim has too much sense to believe you," said she, gently tapping him with her fan. 'Though unaccustomed to town-circles, she knows that to give a lecture upon any subject in a mixed company would be very improper; though not so bad (whispering Mr. Sardon) as to lead a poor wrong-headed girl into the folly of exposing herself to the ridicule of a whole company.'

"No time can be improper for the promulgation of truth," said Bridgetina. "Mr. Sardon speaks

speaks like a philosopher. He knows it is our duty in every company to argue, to reason, to discuss. But to be sure," continued she, drawing up her head with an air of conscious triumph, "it is not every person that is qualified to enlighten the world by abstract speculation.

'Miss Botherim speaks like an oracle!' cried Mr. Sardon. He was going on, but was checked by a frown from Mrs. Fielding, who observing the eyes of the whole room fixed on Bridgetina, desired her to sit down in a corner less exposed to observation. Thither she was followed by Mr. Sardon, who continued to amuse himself with her eccentricity; while the curiosity excited by the singularity of her appearance, and the pedantic formality of her manner, attracted round them a circle of ladies who were all eager to listen to their conversation.

Though cards were not excluded from the parties of Mrs. Fielding, they were generally declined by the majority of the company. Where persons qualified to relish the pleasures of conversation have an opportunity of enjoying it in perfection, they must, indeed, be the fettered slaves of custom, if they prefer an amusement in which fools may conquer, and knaves be crowned with victory, to the refined delight arising from the communication of ideas, the collision of wit, and the instructive observations of genius.

From the appearance of Bridgetina something very extraordinary was expected. Mrs. Fielding's taste for the conversation of people of talents was well known. Her solicitude to bring forward extraordinary genius from the depressing shade of obscurity had often been crowned with success; but though talents had her admiration, it was goodness and virtue that could alone en-
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ture her approbation or esteem. Her situation in life gave her an opportunity of selecting her acquaintance, and her discernment and discrimination afforded her the means of employing this inestimable privilege to the best advantage. No sooner, therefore, was a new face seen in her drawing-room, than her friends anticipated a new source of pleasure or improvement; nor were they often disappointed. Sometimes, indeed, it would happen, notwithstanding the art she displayed in mixing her guests, that two learned men would get near enough to fall into a tedious argument concerning the etymology of a word, or some minute point in history or antiquity, for which not another soul but themselves could care a single straw; and sometimes a dispute in politics would cast a temporary cloud over the good-humour of the disputants; but by the management of Mrs. Fielding these things rarely occurred. She was at such pains to provide the talkers with listeners, and the listeners with talkers, and to suit the subject of conversation to the general taste, that all enjoyed in some degree the pleasure of pleasing, and the happiness of being pleased.

Bridgetina was at first afraid to run on in the words of her favourite authors, as she could not doubt that the subject of her studies must be familiar to the greatest part of her well-informed audience. Great was her surprise, when she discovered that the books which she believed were destined to enlighten the whole world, and new-model the human race, had not been thought worthy of a reading by any one who heard her. She took advantage of the discovery to quote page after page, while any one would listen to her; but though the novelty of her arguments for
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some time excited attention, and her flow of language did not fail to obtain applause, she soon experienced the common fate of an haranguer, in wearying the patience of those she pretended to instruct. Fatigued with the monotonous sounds of her discordant voice, they turned from her, and gladly joined the different groupes where subjects of general literature, or of elegant criticism, gave every one an opportunity of contributing their quota to the fund of conversation.

Bridgetina was now in her turn, obliged to become a listener, till her patience being quite exhausted, she arose, and walking across the room to where Mrs. Fielding sat, enquired aloud whether she might expect to see Dr. Sydney there that night? Mrs. Fielding told her she need not expect to see him, as he had another engagement.

“ You are acquainted with his engagements !” cried Bridgetina. “ You are the confidante of his bosom, the object of his passion ! it is for you he rejects my love ! but if you have any moral sensibility, if you are at all capable of energising, I do not despair of convincing you that you owe it to duty, you owe it to every principle of justice, you owe it to the happiness of an individual to relinquish your designs on the person of this amiable young man.”

Mrs. Fielding, shocked beyond measure at a speech which so strongly indicated a disordered state of intellect, thinking it better to soothe than to irritate the mind of the speaker, in a voice of pity told her, that if she would, on the morning after the following, give her the pleasure of her company at breakfast, she would endeavour to give her satisfaction.

"I shall not fail to come," said Bridgetina;
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"and as truth is omnipotent, I make no doubt my arguments will prevail." So saying she took her leave, to the great delight of Mr. Fielding, who, tho' she never made a practice of being denied; immediately ordered that Miss Botherim should never again be admitted with other company.

As Bridgetina retired, the servant stationed in the anti-room desired the footman below to call Miss Botherim's carriage. "I have no carriage, sir," said Bridgetina, "I disdain the use of a carriage, which is a contrivance of pampered luxury, and altogether unnecessary to a philosopher?"

The man bowed, and again gravely advancing to the head of the stairs, 'Open the street-door to a philosopher,' cried he, with the voice of a Stentor.

Bridgetina, highly pleased with the compliment, thanked him, and descending, made her way through an avenue of grinning footmen, to whom her appearance afforded no small subject of merriment. The door was opened by the footman who had formerly conducted her to the coach, and who had the civility again to offer to procure her either coach or chair; but she declined his services, declaring there was nothing she so much loved as a solitary ramble by moonlight.

Unfortunately for Bridgetina, her reply to the footman was overheard by a couple of girls, who were on their way to Bond-street in search of adventures, and who eagerly seized the opportunity that presented itself, of venting the malignant spirit of mischief in that sort of outrage which is vulgarly denominated *fun*. They soon came up with

with Bridgetina, and getting her between them, addressed her with pretended gravity.

“Do you intend to take a long walk?” cried one.

‘Yes, upon the tight-rope, as you may perceive by her dress,’ cried the other.

“I intend to walk no farther than Conduit-street,” said Bridgetina; “and am such a stranger in town, that I know not where such a walk as tight-rope is.”

A loud laugh from her companions very much discomposed our heroine, who, greatly offended by their rudeness, begged they would leave her to her own reflections.”

‘Own reflections, pretty dear!’ said the tallest of the girls. ‘Do you know, Maria, where *own* reflections is?’

“I’ll be hanged if I do,” replied the other; “unless it be in Rag-fair, where she bought that quiz of a wig.”

‘My dress is no concern of yours,’ said Bridgetina, angrily; ‘and I must need tell you, it is rather uncivil to intrude upon me in this manner, when I wish to be alone.’

“Why don’t you leave us,” said one, giving her a push, and winking significantly to the other. “I am sure I don’t wish to keep you.”

“Nor I neither,” said the other; ‘I would not be seen walking with such a trollopy quiz for the world.’ So saying, she gave the unfortunate Bridgetina such a push towards her companion, that both were driven upon the rails. Bridgetina screamed, but before she could recover herself, was again pushed with such violence by the girl against whom she had last been driven, that after reeling a few paces she fell prostrate in the kennel. The girls set up a shout of victory, while Bridgetina,

tina, forgetful of the immoral tendency of coercion, vociferated Murder! help! murder! as loud as she was able to bawl. In an instant the street, which was before still as midnight, was filled with a croud, which as few were seen to issue from the houses, seemed as if by enchantment wafted to the spot. The dread sound of the watchman's rattle gave the signal for alarm. Three or four guardians of the night were soon assembled, who, at the instance of Bridgetina, would have taken her companions into custody, had they not by a singular piece of effrontery contrived to turn the popular voice in their favour.

"What!" cried the one who had shoved Bridgetina into the kennel, "you are pretty watchmen, indeed! pretend not to know Poll Maddoc! the most notorious wench in London. There's ne'er a boy in St. Giles's that don't know squinting Poll. She was condemned at the Old-Bailey for picking the pocket of Jerry Wapping last 'sizes, let her deny it if she dare; or that she nimm'd that wig from Moses the jew in Rag-fair; or that she is now kept by Peter Puff, the puppet-show-man. She cry out murder, indeed, because we would not suffer her to walk the streets with us. Does she think that we would be seen in company with such a trull? No, no; it an't come to that yet; we will let her know that we are meat for her masters."

This oration quickly turned every voice against the hapless Bridgetina, who in vain protested that the orator had mistaken her person.

The sagacious watchman recognised her as an old acquaintance, and declared that he should provide her a night's lodging in the watch-house.

Bridgetina expostulated; she declared she was going home to her lodgings, when accosted by the
two

two ladies who had given such an erroneous description of her person.

'Your lodgings!' cried the watchman with a sneer, 'you intended to sleep with master punch, did you? but we shall lodge you as safe as with the devil, and Doctor Faustus to boot; come along, we cannot stay for any more jabber.' So saying, he seized the reluctant arm of Bridgetina, but was stopped for a moment by his coadjutor, who, jogging the other arm of his prisoner, told her in a whisper, that 'if she would tip them half a-crown she might still regain her liberty.'

"Half-a-crown!" repeated Bridgetina, "I have not a single shilling in my pocket; but if you will call upon me to-morrow, I shall pay you the money with pleasure."

'To-morrow!' said the watchman; 'that's all my eye, d'ye see. D'ye think I'm such a simpleton as to trust your word?'

"I know," replied Bridgetina, "that promises are immoral, and ought not to be considered as binding; but in the present case — —"

'No more palaver,' said the honest watchman; 'if you don't down with the ready, you must go.'

Bridgetina begged to be heard, but in vain. Each seizing an arm, they dragged her off; and had nearly reached the end of the street, when, to the unspeakable joy of the struggling, weeping Bridgetina, she perceived Henry Sydney advancing towards them.

Great was the surprise of Henry, on beholding the dismal plight of our heroine; of which, in a commanding voice, he instantly demanded the cause. He could not very easily understand either the story of the watchmen, or the incoherent detail of Bridgetina, but found it no dif-

ficult matter to persuade the guardians of the peace of their mistake; who, receiving from his pocket some very convincing arguments in favour of their prisoner's innocence, did not hesitate to deliver up their charge.

'I hope, (said he) Miss Botherim,' as he conducted her to Mrs. Benton's door, 'this incident will convince you that London is a very improper place for you to remain in, while destitute of the protection of any friend. You see how your ignorance of the manners of the metropolis exposes you to insult. I am happy in having rescued you at present from a situation so terrible that I shudder to think of it; but another time you may not be so fortunate to meet a friend. Let me, therefore, intreat you to think of an immediate return to W——, where your mother is made miserable by your absence.'

"Cruel Henry!" returned the weeping Bridgetina; "but I now know the motive of your conduct. Let me but reason the matter with you in one single conference, and I shall be satisfied."

Henry, in hopes of being able to conquer her strange infatuation by argument, consented to drink tea with her the following evening; and having seen her under the protection of Mrs. Benton's roof, took his leave, and pursued his way to his own lodgings.

CHAP. X.

"Bring me a father that so lov'd his child,
 "Whose joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,
 "And bid him speak of patience!
 "No, no; 'tis all men's office to speak patience
 "To those that wring under the load of sorrow;
 "But no man's virtue nor sufficiency
 "To be so moral when he shall endure,
 "The like himself."

SOUTHEY.

BEFORE we accompany Henry on his visit to Bridgetina, it may not be amiss to take a retrospective view of the manner in which he has been engaged from the time we left him reading the proposals of his enlightened and liberal admirer.

The ungrateful Henry, far from being elevated into rapture by the exalted sentiments and generous proposals of the philosophic maiden, having given her letter a hasty and peevish perusal, threw it on the ground; nor did he at that time vouchsafe to read the paper which had been inclosed in it, and which was no other than the circular letter addressed by Mr. Myope to his brethren the philosophers.

By the unfortunate fate of the amiable Julia, and the deep affliction of her wretched parents, the mind of Henry was so completely engrossed, that he had not a single thought to bestow on the tender woes of Bridgetina. Even the reflections upon his own situation were suspended; and selfish cares and selfish sorrows were absorbed in the benevolent feelings of compassion, or banished by disinterested regret. He flew to the lodg

ings of his friend Churchill, whom he found just arrived; his body worn out with fatigue, and his mind lacerated by disappointment. After many vexatious delays and interruptions, he had traced the fugitives to London; but there, having stepped from the post-chaise into the first empty hackney-coach that met them, they effectually eluded all further pursuit. Henry spent the remainder of the day with his friend, and devoted the greatest part of the succeeding ones to his assistance. Their endeavours were fruitless. The retreat of the lovers could not be discovered; and poor Churchill, at length submitting to the judgment of Henry, was persuaded to give over the hopeless research.

The day of the election of the physician for the hospital at length arrived; when the rival candidate having, in consequence of a private visit from Mrs. Fielding's agent, relinquished his pretensions, Henry was unanimously chosen to the vacant office; and thankfully rejoiced in his success, as a step towards that state of independency on which his dearest hopes of happiness seemed entirely to depend. Still were his prospects distant, far distant from such an income as would, in the present state of society, be deemed adequate to the support of a family. Many men of the first abilities in his profession had, he well knew, spent their lives in hopeless penury; and that he should be one of the fortunate few whom the caprice of fashion should introduce to fortune's favours, was a per-adventure too precarious for hope to build on.

The peculiar advantage he enjoyed of being introduced by Mrs. Fielding into the houses of several families of distinction, does not appear to have been estimated by Henry at its full value.

He

He was so ignorant as to imagine, that when people were sick, they would look more to the experience and abilities of the physician in whose hands they entrusted their lives, than to his rank in the scale of fashion. He did not think it possible that the vanity of a dying man could be flattered by having his prescription written by the same hand that had lately felt the pulse of a lord; or that his weeping wife and daughters could feel a superior gratification in telling their friends that the dear deceased had been visited by Doctor —, at the very time he was attending my Lady Duchess, than they should have experienced from the happy effects of any medical skill. Of the omnipotence of fashion Henry had as yet formed no adequate idea; and trusting to his own efforts, he resolved by exertion and unceasing assiduity to deserve the success he so ardently wished for.

Several days elapsed without bringing him another letter from W——; neither had Mr. Churchill received any intelligence from that quarter; so that the anxiety of both was wound up to the extreme; when Henry, on returning from his attendance on a new patient, a few hours previous to his chivalrous rescue of Bridgetina from the hands of the giant enchanters, found a letter from his sister, which had been brought by that morning's post. He eagerly broke the seal, and read as follows:

“BEFORE I enter upon subjects of a less pleasing though deeply-interesting nature, let me tell my dear Harry how my heart thanks him for the kind haste he made to rid me of my foolish fears. No; I did not, I could not, suspect you of loving such a woman as Miss Botherin; but I could not help entertaining some sort of

apprehension that you might have left her room to construe some unmeaning speech into an avowal of tenderness. Even here I have been mistaken; and my heart exultingly repeats, that my beloved brother is now as ever free from the shadow of reproach. But the more unequivocal your conduct, the more shameful, the more absurd and preposterous appears that of this weak, bewildered girl, whose brains seems to have been turned by the wild ambition of standing forth a practical champion for doctrines which even in theory are sufficiently ridiculous.

“Would to God that she had been the only sacrifice to these extravagant opinions! But, alas! poor Julia! She too, it seems, was a convert to this new system, which teaches, that by cancelling the bonds of domestic affection, and dissolving the ties of gratitude, the virtue and happiness of the world is to be increased. Fatal delusion! how would it vanish from her mind, could she have but a momentary glance at the altered countenance of her dying father! For these last three days he has continued to suffer all that the most extreme agony of mind, added to the most acute bodily torture, can inflict. Dr. Orwell and my father have united their efforts to soothe his sorrows, and to alleviate the pangs of grief; but, alas! they cannot remove the dart which rankles in his bosom, or lead him to forget that it was planted there by the hand of his much-beloved child.

“The assurance obtained from Mrs. Glib, that Vallaton was not a married man, as had been reported, seemed to convey a short-lived relief; but it was followed by such an account of his character, and of the meanness of his station, (which, it seems, is that of a hair-dresser) as opened every

every wound of the father's heart. Unable to support the war of conflicting passions, his feeble frame seems nearly exhausted by the contest. In proportion as he becomes weaker, the more powerful emotions subside. Indignation gives place to pity, and the feelings of resentment are swallowed up in those of paternal tenderness. He even strives to form excuses for his daughter's conduct, and seems eager to transfer the blame from her to some other object.

"Yesterday as my father sat by his bed-side, after a silence of some minutes. "Mr. Sydney," said he, "you are very good to bear with me; but you are yourself a father, though you cannot—oh, no; you cannot possibly know the sorrow that has pierced me. For the pride I took in this darling child, how severely am I now punished! In the foolishness of my heart, I believed her to be superior to all her sex. I encouraged her to throw off the prejudices of religion—to act from nobler motives than the hopes of an hereafter—to substitute the laws of honour for the laws of God; and to consult the dictates of her mind instead of the morality of the gospel. Oh if I have taught my child to err; if it is for want of more solid principles that she has been made an easy prey to the snares of a seducer—but I cannot bear the thought. Tell me, Mr. Sydney, O tell me that it is not *to me* she owes her fall! Say not that it was I who led my child to the precipice down which she has sunk!"

"You, Harry, who are so well acquainted with the benignity of our dear father's nature, may imagine how much he was affected: nor need I say that he used every endeavour to soothe and comfort the poor unhappy man who seemed thus to cling to him for support. You know how
much

much it is his delight to heal the wounded spirit, and to speak peace to the broken in heart. I pray God that his endeavours may in this instance prove successful!

“Our amiable friend, Harriet Orwell, has done all in her power to supply the place of a daughter to poor Mrs. Delmond. While her attentions have been engrossed by her, I have devoted mine to Mrs. Botherim; who, ever since she heard of Biddy’s departure, has been in a state little short of distraction. Nothing, to be sure, can be more ludicrous than the stile of her lamentations sometimes are; but the voice of sorrow ought to command respect, however mean or absurd the language in which it is conveyed. I am far, you may believe, from justifying a breach of filial duty; but surely the man does great injustice to his children, who gives them a mother so weak, or so ignorant, as to render her despicable in their eyes; not that to a well-regulated mind the weakness of a parent will ever be made the object of contempt; but how should the children of a fool come by the information necessary to point out the line of duty, or to fix the principles of filial piety in the heart?

“Oh, my brother, if ever you marry, may your wife be one whose memory your children’s children shall delight to honour; may she demand from her family, not merely the barren obedience of duty, but the grateful tribute of heart-felt veneration and esteem!

“At the conclusion of the last paragraph, I laid aside my writing, to enquire for Capt. Delmond; the answers sent by a servant are so little satisfactory, that I have generally contrived to go twice a-day myself, and from Harriet have learned the particulars for which I was so anxious.

“Very

“Very little alteration has taken place in his state of mind or health since yesterday, except that he is apparently weaker and more tranquil. Dr. Orwell accompanied me up street. As we approached the house of Mr. Glib the stationer, we perceived a croud about the door; and on enquiring into the cause, were informed that Mr. Glib had suddenly departed from W—, and that the creditors were then taking possession of the few effects he had left behind him. A person from the house requested of Dr. Orwell to step in for a few moments, as the presence of a justice of peace was necessary, in order to take the affidavit of Mrs. Glib about some matters, but I do not know what. While waiting for the Doctor, I was accosted in the rudest manner by two or three of the children, who were running about like so many ragged colts. To say they are in a state of nature would be doing little honour to our species, for never did I see imps so mischievous and impudent. They were happily attracted by the arrival of another stranger, an officer of dragoons, who was lately quartered in a neighbouring town, and whose attentions to Mrs. Glib have not escaped the notice of the scandal loving coterie. This gentleman stepped up to Mrs. Glib’s apartment without ceremony, and from the air of satisfaction that appeared in his manner, went, I hope, with the intention of affording relief to her misfortunes. In a few minutes Dr. Orwell returned to me, and brought with him a letter which Mrs. Glib had put into his hands. It was written by her husband, and left behind him as a justification of his conduct. By this it appears, that in deserting his wife and children his acts *upon principle*. “Convinced,” he says, “of the immoral tendency of matrimony,
and

and that is an odious and unjust institution—a monopoly, and the worst of monopolies—which, by forbidding two human beings to follow the dictates of their own minds, makes prejudice alive and vigorous;* he is resolved to dismiss the mistake he has so happily detected, and no longer seek, by artificial and despotic means, to engross a pretty woman to himself, but to restore to her that liberty, of which (by the despotic sanction of a foolish law) she had been unjustly deprived. As to the five children which she calls *his*, it is a matter of no importance to him whether they are so or no. He has neither the *aristocracy*, *self-love*, or *family pride*,† that teaches prejudiced people to set a value upon a matter in itself so insignificant; and as they may very probably, be no worthier than the children of any other man, it is not consistent with moral justice that he should devote to them the fruits of his labour.

“So far he seems to make use of the words of some author, who probably little imagined that his theory would ever meet with such a practical advocate. In the conclusion, he makes use of his own peculiar jargon, which is often whimsical enough. Talks of Hottentots, who live according to the sublime system that is to be universally adopted in the *Age of Reason*, and hints at a design of emigrating to Africa!

“It is probable Miss Botherim may have been induced to become a party in this projected expedition. For the sake of her poor mother, I hope she will not carry her folly quite so far; and intreat you may do all you can to persuade her to an immediate return to W——.

“Adieu,

* See Pol. Jus. vol. ii. p. 429.

† See Pol. Jus.

“ Adieu, my dearest brother. We have another frank for this day week, which my father desires me to tell you he will fill; in the mean time he sends his blessing. - In my opinion, the greatest we can have from Heaven, is a just sense of the happiness we enjoy in having such a parent. That he may be blessed in the prosperity and happiness of ‘ his heart’s dear Harry,’ is the never-ceasing prayer of

“ Your truly affectionate sister,

“ MARIA SYDNEY.”

A second letter from Maria was enclosed in the same cover. The contents were as follows :

“ I HAVE opened the packet, to inform my dear Henry that the sorrows of Captain Delmond are at an end. They have at length broken the attenuated thread of his existence, and accelerated his departure to the silent grave. Oh, Julia, Julia, what must be thy feelings, when informed of this event ! The infatuation of passion may for a while stifle the voice of nature, but a time will come when the sword with which she has pierced her father’s heart, shall deeply wound her own.

“ The whole of yesterday the poor Captain was so much easier as to give some hopes of his recovery. He sat up great part of the day, and appeared to receive so much pleasure from the company of my father, that he spent the greatest part of it in his apartment. He more than once regretted, that he had so long lived near two such men as my father and Doctor Orwell, without having attempted to cultivate their friendship. ‘ I now,’ said he, ‘ perceive my error, in attributing to the spirit of the christian religion itself that gloomy liberality which I have observed in
some

some of its pretended votaries: I see that its priests are not necessarily either mercenary knaves or zealous bigots; and begin to apprehend, that while I piqued myself on being superior to prejudice, I have in reality been its dupe.'

"The endeavours used by my father to soothe and tranquillize his mind appeared to be effectual; and he left him in such a composed and happy state, as seemed to promise a night of undisturbed repose. No sooner, however, was he left to his own meditations, than his thoughts appear to have recurred to the subject of his uneasiness. He became restless, impatient, and not unfrequently delirious. Sometimes he uttered the wildest threats against the villain who had deprived him of his daughter; and sometimes he called upon her name, and in the tenderest and most supplicating voice, adjured her not to leave him. Towards morning he called upon the nurse to assist him in changing the posture of his head; and while she did so, 'Oh, Julia! Julia!' he murmured in a feeble voice, 'I looked to thy dear hand to smooth my death-bed pillow—but I forgive thee!' His voice failed, he sunk down upon the bed, and in a few moments expired.

"Mrs. Delmond, being worn out with fatigue and grief, had, by the persuasion of Harriet, (who has indeed acted like an angel) lain down to take some rest. She had fallen into a profound slumber, from which she would have been hastily awakened by the nurse; but Harriet, satisfying herself that all was over, would not permit the slumbers of the poor widow to be disturbed. By her wise precaution, Mrs. Delmond regained some strength of mind as well as of body; and, supported by her soothing tenderness, has been enabled

enabled to bear her afflictions with more fortitude than could have been expected.

“ A message from General Villers has just arrived, requesting Mrs. Delmond’s permission to take upon himself the charge of the funeral; which he wishes to be performed in a manner suitable to the birth and merit of his deceased friend.

“ Your letter is this moment put into my hand, Ah ! in what just colours does it paint the amiable Churchill ! what noble generosity of sentiment ! What affecting sensibility ! That Julia should have known him, should have seen (and how could she be blind to a partiality so visible) the impression he had made upon his heart, and yet give her preference to a wretch like Vallaton, is a mystery to me inexplicable. Adieu ! dearest Henry, my spirits are so depressed I can say no more, but that I am ever affectionately yours,

“ M. S.”

Henry had no sooner perused his sister’s letter, than he hastened to his friend Churchill to inform him of the contents. As the quickest method of doing so, he gave it him to read, a breach of delicacy which we can by no means excuse. If Henry had given a moment’s consideration to what the feelings of Maria would have been, could she have seen the eye of Churchill gazing on her letter, and devouring, with an appearance of more than common interest, those passages concerning himself, which she would least of all have exposed to his perusal, Henry would not have given the letter out of his own hand.

Churchill returned it to him with a sigh. “ What a charming girl is your sister,” said he. “ How clear her understanding ! How just her sentiments !

sentiments! Happy had it been for poor Julia Delmond had her mind been formed like hers. But the death of the poor father—how very shocking it is! He deserved a better fate. I foolishly flattered myself that I should have had it in my power to contribute to his happiness, and promised myself much pleasure in performing to him the duty of a son. That is over. And I can now only shew the respect I bear his memory, by assisting at the last offices of humanity, and following his body to the grave.”

Henry, finding it in vain to oppose this sudden design of his friend, left him to follow his inclination. To say truth, had he been at liberty to consult his own, he would much rather have encountered the fatigue of a midnight journey, to accompany him to W——, than have gone to the splendid party to which he was engaged.

It was on his return from this party, that he discovered our heroine in the deplorable situation from which he had the good fortune to rescue her. He now reproached himself for the little pains he had taken to persuade her of the folly and impropriety of her remaining in London, and resolved to lose no time in urging the necessity of her immediate return to W——. He next morning communicated his intention to Mrs. Fielding, when, by her own appointment, he waited on her to report the situation of some poor patients she had recommended to his attention. On receiving from her an account of all that had passed the preceding evening, his hopes of success became rather less sanguine, but the necessity there appeared to him of making some effort to rescue the poor girl from a situation exposed to so many evils, made him resolve on making

making the experiment. While canvassing the subject with Mrs. Fielding, her carriage drove up to the door, in which, accompanied by Henry, she set off on a tour of visits; and strange to tell, set off with a certain assurance of receiving, wherever she appeared, a hearty welcome!

CHAP. XI.

"Come hither, out-cast one! and call her friend,

"And she shall be thy friend more readily,

"Because thou art unhappy.

"Art thou astonish'd, maid,

"That one, though powerful, is benevolent?

"In truth, thou well may'st wonder!"

SOUTHERY.

"**A WELCOME!**" repeats some lovely fair one, as with a yawn she throws down the book at the conclusion of the last chapter. "La! how vulgar! What a bore to find one's friends at home! I am fatigued to death at the very thoughts of it. What odd notions these low authors have of the manners of the fashionable world!"

Stay, dear lady, and be convinced that we are not so ignorant, or so little accustomed to the world of fashion, as you seem to imagine. Well do we know, that in dropping your tickets at the splendid dwellings of the *dear friends*, whose names ye in return expect to swell your porter's list, ye have neither end nor object in view, but the gratification of your own vanity; a vanity which might be somewhat humbled, were ye
obliged

obliged to witness the mortification that would be inflicted on your *dear friends* by your tiresome and insipid company. Wisely, therefore, do ye keep your insignificance concealed ; and trust the gratification of your pride and vanity not to your own intrinsic merits, but to those of the honest artificers, whose united labours have clothed your equipage with splendor. But never, when rolling in that splendid equipage, did the loud thundering of your well-drest footman at the door of a duchess, not even when it has disturbed half a street, touch your conscious heart with half the extacy that Mrs. Fielding experienced, when after walking down a dirty lane, too narrow for her coach to enter, her gentle tap at the door of a decayed house was opened by a face beaming with gratitude, and her presence hailed as that of a superior being, the dispenser of happiness and joy !

It happened that this obscure retreat of wretchedness was not above a hundred yards remote from the residence of a man of fashion, at whose house Mrs. Fielding was engaged to dine the day of her first visit to its starving inhabitants. Her heart was still full of the scene she had witnessed. The ghastly figure of the wretched father of the family, stretched upon a pallet in one corner of the room in the agony of a rheumatic fever, was still before her eyes ; the appearance of his wife, not four and twenty hours delivered, sitting up in bed, and with her feeble hands stretching out some pieces of muslin which a lady had in charity sent her to clear-starch, and in which she was assisted by the eldest little girl, a half-naked and more than half-starved creature of nine years old, who worked with eagerness in hopes of sharing in the bread to be thus procured,

oured, and for which four other little mouths now vainly clamoured, still dwelt on Mrs. Fielding's imagination; when she took her place at the loaded board of the voluptuous baronet, who was equally remarkable for the irascibility of his temper, and the epicureanism of his table.

In vain had the ingenuity of the purveyor, and the art of the cook, been employed to please the sickly appetite of this son of luxury. Every dish afforded him a subject of inquietude and vexation. It was upon a fine turbot that he particularly vented the ebullition of his wrath. The sauce had not been made to please him, and sauce and turbot were ordered from the table, with directions that they might be thrown to the dunghill, as they were not fit even for the dogs.

An involuntary exclamation, which at that moment escaped the lips of Mrs. Fielding, reached the angry gentleman's ears. He immediately asked her pardon for his violence, but urged the impossibility of keeping his temper on an occasion so provoking.

"You need make no apology to me, sir," said Mrs. Fielding; for *me* your behaviour has not insulted."

"I hope I have insulted no one," returned the Baronet, attempting to resume his cheerfulness, while his fiery eye and contracted forehead indicated the rage that still possessed his breast.

"Pardon me, sir," said Mrs. Fielding, "if I differ from you."

"I really do not understand you, Madam," rejoined the Baronet; "to whom has my sending away that execrable dish given offence?"

"To the image of God in your fellow-creature, now starving at your very door!" returned Mrs. Fielding. "To the famished wretches, who

who, while you are gorged to loathing, have not even bread for their mouths. Within a hundred yards from where you now sit, have I this morning seen a family of eight souls, to whom the price of that very dish you have spurned from your table would have afforded luxuries for a week. It is the pardon of *such as these* you should solicit, for to misery such as theirs your conduct is an insult."

Mrs. Fielding felt her energy in the cause of humanity not a little strengthened by the striking contrast this day afforded her, betwixt the sickly caprice of voluptuousness and the eagerness of hungry poverty.

It was to give his medical advice to the father of this little family of wretchedness, that she carried Henry to their habitation, which now wore a very different aspect from that which on her first visit it had presented. The children were now clothed; the furniture, which had been by piece-meal sent to pawn, was now replaced; the wife with maternal tenderness pressed the infant to her bosom, whose birth she had deplored as an aggravation to her misfortunes; and even the poor husband, relieved from the torture of beholding his family perishing before his eyes for the want of that food which sickness rendered him unable to procure, felt half the acuteness of his malady removed, and with tears of gratitude implored the best blessing of Heaven upon his worthy benefactress.

After a few visits of a similar nature, Mrs. Fielding carried our young physician to a large house destined for the reception and temporary abode of such of her own sex as, from being destitute of friends in London, were (when by sickness or misfortune thrown out of employment)

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in danger of being driven, through fear of want, into habits of infamy. The incident that gave rise to this plan of charity in Mrs. Fielding's mind, is sufficiently interesting to claim the attention of those of our readers who really believe people of an inferior station to be composed of the same materials with themselves.

It happened one cold evening in December, that on returning from the theatre, through a narrow street, an accident which befel a preceding carriage occasioned a stop of many minutes to the line of carriages which followed. Mrs. Fielding let down the glass to enquire the cause; and having learnt it, was about to pull it up and patiently wait the event, when her attention was attracted by an object of wretchedness, who with looks of deep humility implored alms at the door of the coach which was immediately before her's in the line. She heard the glass violently drawn up, and saw at the same moment the trembling emaciated wretch who had presumed to supplicate, receive a blow for her impertinence from the rattan of the laced footman who stood behind. Mrs. Fielding, who could not help feeling indignant at an insult offered to misery, even when coupled with vice, was about to offer the poor wretch a compensation for what she had endured, when she saw her familiarly accosted by a bold-looking fellow of the order vulgarly called *jabby-genteel*. The lamp now shone full upon the object of her attention, and displayed a countenance that had once been handsome, but apparently wasted by sickness and famine. She seemed to shrink from the person who addressed her, but yet wanted resolution to resist his importunity. She suffered him to take one of her hands, while with the back of the other she wiped the tears which

which trickled down her pallid cheek: The coach moved a step or two nearer. Mrs. Fielding distinctly heard the ejaculation, 'Oh, God, forgive me! if to save myself from starving——' She could hear no more. The obstruction to the proceeding of the further carriage being now removed, it drove on with fury, and Mrs. Fielding's, with the rest that followed it, suddenly darted forward in full speed.

Mrs. Fielding's sensibility was not of that nature which can content itself with dropping a graceful tear to the misery which an active exertion of benevolence has power to relieve. She hastily pulled the check-string, and having called the footman, "Run, Thomas, run with speed, I beseech you, after that poor woman, whom yonder wretch is dragging away. Desire her to come hither; fly——"

Thomas hesitated. 'I presume, Madam, you do not know that she is——'

"No matter what she is—I must speak to her."

Thomas obeyed; and no sooner did the poor forlorn creature hear the welcome message, than struggling from the man who had hold of her, she hastened as fast as her trembling limbs could carry her, to the coach-door over which Mrs. Fielding leaned.

"You appear to be in great misery, young woman;" said Mrs. Fielding, in a voice of pity.

'I am, indeed, Madam! in misery that is inexpressible.'

"But is taking to a course of vice the proper way to procure relief? Would it not be better by honest industry to seek a livelihood, than by continuing in the path of infamy, to——"

'Ah, Madam! I am not the wretch you take
me

me for. I am, indeed, I as yet am virtuous; but I am starving. I have not one farthing to get either food or lodging. I wish I had courage to die! I know it would be better; and that I out to die, rather than be wicked—but I am *so hungry!*——’

Her weak and hollow voice here became quite inarticulate; it died away in short convulsive sobs, a shivering came over her, and she would have sunk to the ground, had she not been supported by Thomas; who, having caught the contagion of pity from his mistress, was now as zealous to relieve the poor unfortunate, as he was before unwilling to go after her. What was to be done? To leave her in her present situation, was to leave her to perish. A heavy shower came on, which instantly determined Mrs Fielding. She ordered Thomas to open the coach-door, and to lift the poor exhausted wanderer into the carriage, where she supported her with her own arms all the way to Hanover-square. A few mouthfuls of biscuit soaked in wine restored the sinking powers of nature; and Mrs. Fielding, who administered the cordial with her own hands, had the pleasure of beholding the colour return to the faded cheek, and an expression of sensibility reanimate the sunken eye.

‘Are you an angel?’ cried the poor miserable, grasping Mrs. Fielding’s hand, as she held out to her a bit of biscuit. ‘Yes, yes, you must be an angel! no great lady could be so condescending, so very, very good.’

“Alas!” said Mrs. Fielding, “that the common duties of humanity, in a world where misfortune in one shape or other is the lot of all, should be so rare as to be thus over rated!”

The salutary refreshment she had received,
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aided by a night's repose, had so far restored the poor woman, that when she appeared before Mrs. Fielding on the following morning, she could hardly believe it was the same person.

In answer to Mrs. Fielding's interrogatories, she informed her, that she was the daughter of a Northumbrian peasant: that an elder brother, who had come up to London some few years before, had got so good a place as shopman at a druggist's, that on her father's death she was tempted to come up to town likewise—hoping, through her brother's interest, to procure a place as maid of all work in some creditable family. On arriving in London, she found that her brother had died of the small-pox the week before, and his master (who was a batchelor, had been appointed surgeon in the army, and was then on the eve of embarking for the West-Indies. He however had the goodness, before his departure, to recommend her to a lady and gentleman from Devonshire, who had taken lodgings in Suffolk-street, where they had the use of a back-kitchen. From breathing the pure air of the Northumberland mountains, she was transferred to this unwholesome dungeon, where she had not been confined for many weeks when she was seized with a fit of illness, forced to leave her place, and with the small pittance of wages she had acquired in her short service, to pay for a lodging, food, and physic. On recovering from her fever, which lasted many weeks, she found herself deep in her landlady's debt, who had the goodness to accept of all the remains of her little wardrobe in lieu of cash; and having stripped her of every thing but the rags in which she used to do her dirty work, *humanely* turned her out to the street. A stranger in London, and without friends, to whom

whom could she apply for relief? Who would listen to the tale of her misfortunes? Who would accept her services, or open their doors to receive a wretch that had none to help her?

At the time she was seen by Mrs. Fielding, she had been eight and forty hours without food. Her virtuous principles revolted at the proffered wages of prostitution, till hopeless of succour, and overpowered by the repulse she had met with from the sentimental Lady Mary Mildmay and her powdered footman, she gave way to the impulse of despair, and would probably, if the interposing hand of Mrs. Fielding had not been held out to save her, soon have added one other wretched female to the thousands who yearly perish by disease and want, in the streets of the most wealthy, most charitable, and the most munificent city in the world.

“Surely,” said Mrs. Fielding, “there is something wrong in this. There ought to be a reputable receptacle established for affording temporary shelter to those who are willing to eat the bread of honest industry. The government ought—but, alas! I cannot dictate to the government. I have not the power to influence the makers of our laws. But cannot I do something towards the relief of a few of these unhappy individuals? Let me see—”

She then began to make calculations. Gradually, and with deep reflection formed her plan; appropriated a sum to carry it into execution; and at the time she carried Henry to her asylum, she could exult in the reflection, that without injury to her fortune, without assistance from the public, or aid from the purse of any individual, she had, in the five years that had elapsed since the commencement of her scheme, afforded relief to above a thousand destitute females, of

whom many were snatched from the jaws of ruin, and saved from courses that would have led to infamy or death.

At first the number admitted was very limited. She had now fourteen beds constantly occupied by as many women, whose willing industry was employed to such advantage in needle-work of various descriptions, that they entirely cleared the price of their maintenance. These were chiefly composed of servants, who by sickness, accident, or misfortune, had been thrown out of employment, and who were willing by their diligence to procure the recommendation of the house to creditable places. The unhappy female abandoned by the seducer, for whom she had quitted the protection of her friends, here found that shelter she dared not to implore from her offended family; and if inclined to acquire habits of industry, was soon put in a way of earning a comfortable subsistence, and of regaining the invigorating stimulus of self-approbation. Even the wretched outcast of society, such as are every session disgorged from our prisons, and after having been acquitted by a jury of all crime, are charitably sent forth either to *steal* or *perish*, was admitted here; not indeed to the superior apartment, but to one provided with every necessary for their accommodation, where works of an inferior nature were carried on, the profits accruing from which were all appropriated to cloathing the poor wretches who here found shelter.

Three hundred a year was the sum first designed by Mrs. Fielding to be expended in this charity. It gradually increased to five, and would have been much greater, had the not found means to engage an American merchant in her interest, who opened a store in Charlestown for the sale of

of ready-made linen garments; and would have taken off her hands, at a good price, more than she was able to supply.

"Five hundred a year!" cries Lady Racket; "bless me, what a sweet masked ball one might give every winter with such a sum! It is true, Mrs. ****'s, and Lady *****'s, cost twice the money; but with five hundred pounds well managed, one might give a very pretty, dashing, stiletish sort of an entertainment for a single evening. Do'nt you think so?"

CHAP. XII.

"This *forager* on others' wisdom, leaves
 "Her native farm, her reason quite untill'd.
 "With mixt manure she surfeits the rank soil,
 "Dung'd, but not dress'd; and rich to beggary,
 "A pomp untameable of weed prevails."

Young.

MRS. Fielding and Henry were so deeply engaged in conversation as the carriage went down Holborn, they perceived not Bridgetina paddling along the dirty street. They did not, however, pass unobserved by her. "Yes!" cried she aloud, "there they are, side by side, tasting the balmy sweetness, drinking the delicious poison, which unsophisticated effective love sheds through the human heart! Perhaps they are now going to be married. O odious institution! nurse of depravity! foe to energy and usefulness! Never shall I prevail upon the prejudices of Henry to

break thy galling chain. But why should I despair? Is not truth omnipotent? Must not my reiterated efforts in the end prevail? What though he should be married? May I not convince him of the immoral tendency of all engagements? May I not demonstrate from the divine principles of philosophy, that promises are not, ought not, to be binding?

Though the busy croud of passengers were too much occupied by their own concerns to take notice of her soliloquy, it met with numerous interruptions from the jostlings of hawkers, porters, draymen, &c. &c. who, careless of all before them, pushed their way in a manner so rude, as would frequently have provoked an expostulation from our heroine, had they not quickly got out of the reach of her voice. At the bottom of Holborn-hill the throng was so great, that she was unable to resist its impetuosity; but hurried along by the torrent, was forced to make a retrograde movement of several steps. On another occasion she was carried forward with a rapidity as much beyond her strength as contrary to her inclination: gasping for breath, she attained the steps of a shop-door, where she stood for a few moments to recover herself. "Ah!" said she to herself, "how great must be his genius, who, in walking through a street like this, *can enter into nice calculations, can digest sagacious reasonings, can declaim or describe, impressed with the deepest sympathy, or elevated to the loftiest rapture!*"* Oh, that I could energize in such a manner!"

"You seem at a loss, Ma'am;" said a tolerably well-dressed man, who at that moment passed. "Can I be of any service to you, in shewing you your way?"

"I should

* Enquirer.

"I should be sorry to task your urbanity, sir," returned Bridgetina; "but if you are going to Mincing-lane, I shall willingly accept of your assistance."

The stranger declaring he should have pleasure in escorting her, Bridgetina laid hold of his offered arm, and ascended Snow-hill, not a little satisfied with her polite conductor. They had proceeded to the middle of Newgate street, Bridgetina all the while loading with praises the benevolence of the stranger; when, to her utter astonishment, giving her a push into the middle of the street, he darted off, and was out of sight in a moment.

'Look to your pockets;' cried a butcher's boy. She did so, and to her no small dismay perceived that they had been both turned inside-out. Happily, a pocket-handkerchief and an empty purse was all she had to lose; but her spirits were so much fluttered by the accident, that she was glad to get into a coach, in which she hoped to return loaded with too considerable a sum to trust to the mercy of another benevolent stranger.

Sir Anthony Aldgate was at home; and our heroine, by her own desire, was conducted into his office, (a little, dismal, dirty-looking hole, where every thing wore the appearance of wretchedness and penury.) Here were several young men of no despicable parentage, no vulgar education, and no mean abilities, destined to pass the flower of their days in summing up pounds shillings, and pence. But though every new combination increased the owner's wealth, it increased not the comforts of one of his dependants. Sir Anthony himself had no idea of any comfort but that of accumulation; and this place, which had been the scene of his successful negotiations, was

in his eyes beauteous as the gates of Paradise, and cheerful as the garden of Eden.

Bridgetina, who had never seen the knight but in his dress-suit and tie-wig, was surprised at the appearance he now made, in a scarlet flannel night-cap, and night-gown of green stuff, lined throughout with crimson flannel. A small black silk handkerchief was tied tightly round his neck, but quite hid from observation by the enormous mass of joller which overhung it. He was seated at the desk when our heroine entered, from which having raised his small black eyes, "My cousin Biddy Botherim!" cried he, "is it possible? I am glad to see you, my dear. But where is your mother? Up stairs, with my wife and daughter, I suppose. Well, better go up to them, and I shall be with you presently. Good-bye."

'My business at present is only with you,' rejoined Bridgetina; 'and I must request an immediate audience.'

"Business with me, my dear; and pray what about? I really did not think you knew any thing about business."

'My business is of some importance,' rejoined Bridgetina; 'I am to inform you that I have immediate use for a thousand pounds, and to request that you would let me have that sum as soon as possible.'

"What! are you then really going to be married!" cried Sir Anthony. "I declare I should not have thought of that; but I hope your mother has taken care of the main chance: a good warm man—hey?—"

'I neither with my mother, or any one else, to concern themselves in my affairs,' said Bridgetina; 'and desire you would put yourself to no farther

farther trouble, than to make over to me the sum I mention.'

"Fair and softly, cousin," rejoined Sir Anthony; "don't you know that my consent in this business is absolutely necessary? And do you think that I will give my consent to any person that does not choose to settle your fortune upon you and your lawful issue?"

'I shall have no lawful issue,' cried Bridgetina angrily, 'I hate lawful issue, and every thing that is lawful. Persons of enlightened minds ought not, by giving their sanction to an odious institution, to retard the progress of intellect. I never shall marry.'

"No!" returned Sir Anthony, archly measuring with his little optics the figure of our heroine, "I believe not, my dear, till you get an offer, he, he, he—what, four grapes, Miss Biddy, hey?"

'Whether I have an offer or not, sir, is no concern of yours. All you have to do is, to let me have a thousand pounds of my own fortune, which I can now dispose of in a way that will reflect lasting honour on my name, and effectually operate towards the grand end of life, general utility.'

"A thousand pounds!" cried Sir Anthony, in amazement. "What d—ned fools these people in the country are; they know no more of the price of stocks than what's doing in the moon. Time of war, time of peace, loan or no loan, all's the same to them. I'd lay ten pounds to a sixpence, thou can't not tell what contols were done for any time these three months; and yet ye would fell out, would ye? A pretty ignoramus, truly! You may thank your stars, my dear, that your father left ye in better management. A

thousand pounds, indeed ! And pray, how would your wife head speculate with a thousand pounds ?”

‘ Your perceptions,’ returned Bridgetina, with a contemptuous sneer, ‘ your perceptions are too obtuse to penetrate the scope of the grand design in which I am about to engage. The virtues of the philosophers of Africa, with whom I intend shortly to associate, are too sublime for the comprehension of a vulgar mind. The——’

“ What ! going to speculate in Sierra-Leona shares, Miss Wisehead, are ye ? But what, indeed, poor thing, should you know of such matters ? Be thankful, again I tell you, be thankful that your father wisely put you into better hands. No man upon ‘Change can tax me with having ever lost a farthing upon idle speculation. I remember in the year sixty-seven—no—I believe it was in the year sixty-nine—aye, now I think of it, it was in sixty-nine, for it was the very day after Mr. Alderman Pruett gave his grand feast on being elected in the ward of ——; I remember it well ; the turtle soup was the very best I ever ate in my life. I say it was in the year sixty-nine, just as——”

Here Bridgetina made an attempt to interrupt the knight, but in vain ; he thus proceeded :

“ You shall hear—you shall hear—I hate to be tedious. Just, I say, as I turned the corner of ‘Change-alley, who should come up to me but Mr. Peter Purdy, brother to Purdy of Yarmouth, the great speculator in whale-blubber. He was a Scotchman ; so was Peter. Aye, aye ; they were both Scotsmen ; a shrewd fellow, I warrant ye. Thought to take me in ! But you shall hear. As I was saying, just as I turned the corner of ‘Change-alley, up comes Peter. Now you must know,

know, stocks had been done for 87½ for the January account. I was then a bull—I remember it well—Nib, of Bartholomew-lane, was a lame duck, and Tom——”

‘I never concern myself with any body’s ducks,’ cried Bridgetina, impatiently, ‘I leave the care of the poultry entirely to my mother, and to her you may talk of such matters with propriety; but my energies are directed to nobler objects. Unhappy state of civilization! Odious laws, that put it in a man’s power to secure his property to his children! If it had not been for them my fortune should have been, ere now, disseminated in a direction which——’

‘Aye, aye, you may thank your father’s will for having one shilling to rub upon another, I see that. It would all have gone else to sharpers and swindlers. Your father did well in consulting me; did he not? But, indeed, my cousin Botherim was a man of sense; he never took any step without consulting me. Who, do you think, advised his marriage with your mother? Ah! it was an excellent speculation! Six thousand pounds for a young curate, whose whole stock lay in the Greek and Latin funds; was no bad job, let me tell ye. I knew how old Pasty would cut up. There was not a better frequented cook-shop in London than his. No one made better vermicelli soup. I well remember going there once with old Drugget of Lombard-street, father to Drugget of the Borough; he was partner to Bingley the broker, and did a monstrous deal of business. As I was saying, we went one day to old Pasty’s, your grandfather’s——’

‘What is my grandfather to me?’ cried Bridgetina; ‘an illiterate drudge, whose energies were all directed to the sordid purposes of accumulation.’

on. I once for all desire to have a categorical answer. Will you, or will you not, let me have a thousand pounds of my fortune to dispose of at my own pleasure?"

"A thousand pounds!—no, nor a thousand pence neither; no, nor a single shilling while you remain a spinster, on any pretence whatever; so there's your answer, Miss: will that please you?"

"No, it does not please me; but what can be expected in a state of society so depraved? so—"

"God help the foolish girl, how she talks. Prythee, my dear, where didst thou pick up all this jargon? This is all along of them there foolish books your mother suffers you to read. If I ever caught my daughter so much as opening a book, it should be the dearest day she ever saw. But she is better taught, I promise ye; I don't believe she has looked in one since she came from school; don't know how she should, for not a book has ever been within these doors, but the book of Common-Prayer, and old Robin's almanack. Trust me for that. I know better what to do with my money."

"If you persist in refusing my request of the thousand pounds, I hope at least you will not deny me the trifling sum of twenty guineas for immediate necessities?"

"What! your last dividend all gone already? It is shameful extravagance. I shall not encourage such profusion, such a squandering of property; at a time, too, when it might be laid out to such advantage! It is monstrous. I tell you I shall not encourage it. Want money to buy books, I suppose—do ye? Is that the way you have spent all that I paid you in August?"

"Yes, man of narrow mind. That sum,
which

which would have been spent in useless luxury by a weak, or vilely hoarded by an ignoble, spirit, was by me bestowed to promote the grand object of general utility.'

"General Fiddlestick!" exclaimed Sir Anthony.

Bridgetina, without noticing the interruption, went on. 'It was given to the enlightened Citizen Glib to enable him to import from France several valuable treatises on philosophy and atheism.'

"Philosophy and atheism!" repeated Sir Anthony in a fury. "Hell and confusion, who ever heard the like of this? What has made the stocks fall forty per cent. but philosophy and atheism? What has raised the price of insurance, and burthened the nation with such a load of new taxes, but philosophy and atheism? Tell me that? Why have we raised such an army, aye and such a navy too, but to keep these vile French principles out of the kingdom? And yet this here idle girl, this fool, this little viper, shall be the means of importing in a box, four feet square, all the principles that it has cost us so many millions of money, and so many hundred thousand lives to keep out of the kingdom! Away, I say, and never see my face; I would inform on you for a farthing. Was it not for my cousin Botherim's memory, I should give you lodgings you little think of; but you shall have no harbour here, d'ye mind me! Never again darken my doors, I desire you. Never come here again on such an errand."

'Wretched mortal!' cried Bridgetina, 'how deplorable is thy ignorance! Yet,' continued she, in a tone that sufficiently indicated the violence she did in suppressing her resentment: 'yet thou
hast

hast energies, which, if properly directed, might produce glorious effects. Think not, however, by thy intemperance to intimidate me. He that would adorn himself with the most elevated qualities of a human being, ought to come prepared for encountering obloquy and misrepresentation. When thou art willing to listen to information, I shall be happy to instruct thee, till then I take my leave.' So saying, she tottered in great agitation to the coach, while the knight returned to his seat with an intention of communicating to Mrs. Botherim a full account of the behaviour of her daughter, with a severe censure upon herself for permitting it.

Bridgetina, having given the coachman orders to drive to conduit-street, pulled up the glasses, and throwing herself into a corner of the coach, gave way to a burst of passion, which was the more violent for having been so long suppressed.

Anger and disappointment so entirely occupied her mind, that the door was opened for her at Mrs. Benton's, before she recollected that she had not any means of paying the coachman. Her embarrassment was soon removed by her good-natured landlady; to whom, though she was already indebted more than Mrs. Benton's slender finances could bear without inconvenience, she did not scruple to owe a still farther obligation.

The idea of seeing Henry Sydney in the evening banished every disagreeable impression from her mind. Now, at length, she was to have an opportunity of combating all his objections; now she should have the glory of arguing him into love. A speech which had long been conned, twice written over in a fair hand, and thirteen times repeated in private, was now to prove its efficacy. It was taken from her pocket; the
heads

heads again run over; and for the help of memory, in case of interruption, a sort of index taken of the contents, which she thus read aloud, while the maid cleared the table after dinner. *Moral sensibility, thinking sensibility, importunate sensibility; mental sensation, pernicious state of protracted and uncertain feeling; congenial sympathy, congenial sentiment, congenial ardour; delicious emotions, melancholy emotions, frenzied emotions; tender feeling, energetic feeling, sublimised feeling; the germ, the bud, and the full-grown fruits of general utility, &c. &c.** "Yes," cried she, in extacy, when she had finished the contents, "this will do! Here is argument irresistible; here is a series of calculations, enough to pour conviction on the most incredulous mind. Henry overcome shall cry—Bridgetina, thou hast conquered!"

'*Let not him that girdeth on his armour, boast as he that throweth it off;*' said a wise king of Israel. The victory was not quite so decisive on the side of Bridgetina as she expected. The prejudices of Henry were invincible. Instead of acknowledging the force of her arguments, he laughed at their absurdity. What she called the sublime deductions of recondite and abstract truth, he termed the pernicious delusions of sophistry; and so perversely erroneous were his sentiments, that instead of admiring the contempt of chastity as
an

* Note, for the benefit of Novel-writers.—We here generously present the fair manufacturers in this line with a set of phrases, which, if carefully mixed up with a handful of story, a pretty quantity of moonshine, an old house of any kind, so that it be in sufficient decay, and well tenanted with bats and owls, and two or three ghosts, will make a couple of very neat volumes. Or should the sentimental be preferred to the descriptive, it is only leaving out the ghosts, bats, owls, and moon-light, and the above phrases will season any tender tale to taste.

an exalted proof of female heroism and virtue, he persisted in reprobating the principles that could lead to such an idea, as destructive of the peace, the happiness, and the well-being of society.

Bridgetina, having gone twice round the circle of her arguments, was at length compelled to give an unwilling hearing to those of Henry. He began by assuring her of his friendship, and as the best proof he could give her of his good wishes for her happiness, pointed out to her in the strongest terms the consequences of her present conduct; and earnestly urged the necessity of her immediate return to W——, as the only means of saving her from mortification and misfortune. He had at first laughed very heartily at her strange notion of his being in love with Mrs. Fielding; but apprehensive lest the old lady should be hurt by a hint of any thing so ridiculous, he took some pains to convince Bridgetina of her mistake as to the object of his passion; at the same time declaring, that though delicacy prevented him from mentioning the name of her who possessed his affections, they were for ever fixed.

“Who can promise for ever?” cried Bridgetina. “Are not the opinions of a perfectible being for ever changing? You do not at present see my preferableness, but you may not be always blind to a truth so obvious. How can I believe it compatible with the nature of mind, that so many strong and reiterated efforts shall be productive of no effect? Know, therefore, Doctor Sydney, it is my fixed purpose to persevere. I shall talk, I shall write, I shall argue, I shall pursue you; and if I have the glory of becoming a moral

ral martyr, I shall rejoice that it is in the cause of general utility."

"If you are resolved to be a martyr to your own folly, Miss Botherim," said Henry, rising, "I am determined your friends shall not have me to blame in the business. I solemnly assure you, this is the last time I shall ever speak to you, unless you shew, by your immediate return to W——, that you have recovered a sense of what you owe to yourself and to your sex. Good night."

Bridgetina called after him, in the soft tone of persuasion, but in vain. The hard-hearted youth hurried down stairs, and opening the street-door for himself, was out of hearing in a moment.

To paint the feelings of our heroine, on the abrupt departure of her beloved swain, is a task less suited to the pen than the imagination. To the imagination of our readers we shall therefore leave it; and content ourselves with observing, that as it is one of the prime advantages of *system* to be able to twist, and turn, and construe every thing to its own advantage, defeat produces as potent a stimulus to perseverance as victory.

The three following days were employed by Bridgetina in the composition of a letter, which she determined should be a master-piece of fine writing. It was, indeed, the very essence of philosophy, and flower of eloquence. The style was sublime and energetic, adorned in every sentence by strings of double and treble epithets, and all the new-coined noun-verbs and verb-nouns that have of late so much enriched the English language. As to the arguments, the reader must have formed a very inadequate idea of Bridgetina's powers, if he does not believe them to be answerable. After having carefully taken a
copy,

copy, which she resolved should on some future day be generously presented to the public, she consigned the letter to the care of Jenny, with instructions to give it into Henry's own hand, and diligently to observe the expression of his countenance while he perused it.

The twenty minutes of Jenny's absence appeared an age to Bridgetina. She took her station at the window, and at length had the happiness of seeing her messenger of love appear, loaded to her wish, with a packet still larger than her own. "He has written! He has written!" cried she, in an extacy. "He has at length deigned to enter into a discussion on the important truths it has been my glory to promulgate. My *powers* shall be again called forth in an answer. Our correspondence shall be printed. It shall be published. It shall be called *The Sweet Sensations of Sensibility, or the Force of Argument*. But here she comes. Give me the letter. But before I open it, let me know how he received mine? I see by this it must have arrived in a moment of impression. Did he not kiss the seal? Did he not in trembling extacy press it to his throbbing bosom? Tell me, tell me all, I conjure you."

"He did not kiss a bit of it, that I saw, Ma'am," returned Jenny. "He only took it out of my hand, and said Pshaw."

"Pshaw! What does Pshaw signify? What is its etymology? From whence its derivation? I must look to the dictionary. But did you mark his looks, as he perused the important pages? Did you observe where he changed colour, where he appeared struck with admiration, and where thrilled with delight?"

"I could see nothing of all which you says, Ma'am;

Ma'am ; for though I told him as how that you desired me to see him prufe it, he only said Phoh ! and walked into his closet."

" Charming delicacy ! But here, here it is that I shall view the portrait of his soul. Here the high-wrought frenzied emotions of his bosom are doubtless portrayed. Here——"

' Bless me, Ma'am, how pale you look ! Aye, that is the very letter I carried to the gentleman, sure enough. The seal not so much as broken ! I'll be bound he never read a word on't Well now I vow I never saw a more ungenteeler thing done in all my life ; and if I was you, Ma'am, (thof to be sure, you must know best) but I should ha' my fingers burnt before I should write another fullebul to such a grumpish sort of a gentleman.'

" My epistle of fourteen pages, my precious essay on philosophy and love, returned without a perusal—returned in a blank cover ! O hideous perversion of intellect ! O prejudices, obstinate and invincible ! Has he no sense of justice, no sense of the duty he owes society, that he thus deprives of her usefulness one of its most valuable members ? O Jenny, Jenny, I can energize no longer. The freezing frost of frigid apathy chills my powers. The morbid excess of a dittempered imagination choaks the gerin of general utility ! I shall become a wanderer in the barren wilderness of society, an useless plant in the populous desert of human life ! Leave me, leave me to myself, that I may in apt soliloquy give vent to the palpitating perturbation of my woe-struck fancy."

' Good la ! what a power o' fine words you ha, Ma'am, just at your fingers' ends too, as a body may say. I never did hear so fine a spoken lady in all my life. But, well-a-day ! the men care

no

no more for a woman's words, if so be as how that she happens to be a little ordinary or so, than for the squeaking of a pig. But I would despise the fellows, so I would—and so I does. I walors not e'er a man in the world the walor of a rush!"

Bridgetina again signified her pleasure to be left alone, and Jenny, not a little pleased with having been so far admitted to her confidence, hastened to disburthen herself of all she knew of the late transaction, to the very first person that would give her the hearing.

While Bridgetina was eloquently bemoaning the indignant treatment of her letter in the drawing-room, and Jenny expatiating on the same subject (though, perhaps, in terms not exactly similar) in the kitchen; the whole soul of Henry was entirely occupied, not with Bridgetina, nor with her love, nor with her letter, but with the contents of one he had just received from his father; and in the perusal of which he had been interrupted by Miss Botherim's messenger. The old gentleman's epistle was as follows:

"My dear Henry,

"IT would be superfluous to dwell upon the pleasure your letters have afforded to those most dearly interested in your happiness. Though far from considering fortune as the "one thing needful," the exclusive object of pursuit, I cannot but with thankfulness contemplate your opening prospects of honourable independence. May the Giver of all good bestow upon you a *heart to enjoy*, a mind superior to the restlessness of ambition, and stranger to the gnawings of discontent. For the attainment of these happy dispositions, without which increase of fortune is but increase of sorrow, I know no better means (next to an
habitual

habitual dependence on the Divine favour) than the pursuit of science, particularly those branches of it that are most intimately connected with your profession.

“ I am delighted with the success of your chemical experiments, and still more highly satisfied with the ingenuous frankness you display in so candidly acknowledging your former errors. But such must ever be the consequence of directing our researches, not into the wild and fruitless regions of idle speculation, where the chimeras of fancy are mistaken for realities, and bold conjecture assumes the authoritative tone of truth; but into those laws of nature that, by being objects of sense, and subject to the investigation of experiment, are within the grasp of our limited and feeble minds.

“ Such speculations have, indeed, a direct tendency to influence the moral character of man. It is this that stamps them with their real value; for to whatever height we ascend in tracing the causes which regulate the system of the world, our views must at last terminate in an uncaused Being, in whom all the beauty and order, all the wisdom and power, displayed throughout the universe, are centered. “ When we look around us,” says an amiable philosopher, in the conclusion of a volume that presented a valuable discovery to the world, “ When we look around us, we perceive that every part of the material world is governed by general laws; and when we reflect that in this vast system of things, a race of beings exists, to whom the Deity has communicated a portion of his intelligence and activity, we cannot avoid concluding, that laws must have been ordained for the government of such beings,

as well as for that of all other parts of the universe.*

“ Thus does the study of Nature lead us up to Nature’s God. Thus does the material world itself give evidence to the probability of a revelation, and to those whose minds have been expanded by the contemplation of the union of grandeur and simplicity in the works of creation, it must be peculiarly delightful to observe the same union of grandeur and simplicity characterizing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“ Yes, my son, believe me, the more you study the life and precepts of our great Master, the more forcibly will you be struck with the congruity at which I have already hinted. But, alas ! as in the infancy of natural philosophy, the ill-directed diligence of the chemist was wasted upon trifles, while the grand laws of nature were unnoticed and unknown ; so in the Christian world, has the zeal of believers been more strenuously exerted in the support of non-important forms and dogmas, than in the promulgation of those grand and simple truths which are marked with the signet of Nature’s God.

“ I need not apologize to you, my dear Harry, for being led into a subject which, though the most important, as well as the most exalted, of which human beings can treat, it is, I know, deemed a breach of politeness to hint at even to a friend ; but shall confess, that the impression made upon my mind by the conversation I held with Captain Delmond on his death-bed, has given an unusual degree of solemnity to the train of my ideas. Indeed the misfortunes of that unhappy

* Treatise on Animal Heat and Combustion. By Adair Crawford, M. D.

happy family, as well as the misery that has overtaken some others of this place, so evidently originate in false impressions received of religion, as a gloomy and illiberal system of superstition, that I cannot cease from deploring the neglect of early information on this important point, as the foundation of those mistaken prejudices that are fraught with consequences so fatal to the happiness of society.

“ While Captain Delmond was taught to idolise the name of *honour*, as the palladium of human virtue, religion was presented to his mind as a mean and inferior principle, incapable of inspiring noble sentiments in the soul of a gentleman. Had not the avenues to investigation been thus pre-occupied by prejudice, he would have discovered that *honour*, which is nothing more than a nice susceptibility to the censure or applause of mankind, is neither so grand in its views, so extensive in its operation, nor so noble in its object, as that principle which teaches the heart to appeal for its purity and integrity, not to the purblind judgment of our fellow-mortals, but to a Being of infinite purity and perfection. While performing a part on the busy stage of life, Captain Delmond found honour competent to the purpose of gaining him the flattering approbation of the multitude, which was reverberated by self-applause; but when he proposed it as the sole principle of action to his daughter, when he deprived her mind of the supporting aid of religion, and desired her to consider the intrinsic excellence of virtue as its own sure and only reward, he was not aware how liable she was to be taught by sophistry a definition of virtue very opposite to his. Had a proper value for the morality of the Gospel, enhanced by its gracious promises and elevated

elevated views, been instilled into her tender mind, his child, his darling Julia, would not have brought the grey hairs of her father with sorrow to the grave.

"The remains of this unhappy gentleman were yesterday consigned to their parent dust in military state, and with a degree of magnificence, an ostentatious parade of pomp and grandeur, that, in my opinion, was ill-suited to the occasion. After the conclusion of the ceremony, Gen. Villers and a Major Minden, (a man of large fortune, who, it seems, had made proposals to Miss Delmond) politely waited on the poor forlorn and disconsolate widow, and took their leave of her in terms of the most courtly civility. I expected that the General, who was no stranger to the poverty to which she was reduced, would have come forward with some generous offer of pecuniary assistance. But no: the General's generosity was completely expended in producing the parade of half an hour's procession; and I greatly question, whether he ever does Mrs. Delmond the honour of another visit.

"After the departure of these great gentlemen, I was called out of the room by Quinten, the Captain's old domestic, on whose face was painted the sincerity of sorrow; he beckoned me into the back-parlour, and having once or twice, with a stroke of his hard hand, driven away the tears that fell upon his furrowed cheek, "I thought, sir," said he, "when I saw the lid of the coffin screwed down upon my good master, that I had lived too long. When I heard the hammer knock upon the last nail, my heart so sunk at every stroke, it made a coward of me, and I should have been glad to have skulked to the quiet garison of death. But then, when I thought on
my

my poor mistress, and remembered how my poor dear master loved her, I scorned to be so cowardly as to desert my post, when, by fighting with life a little longer, I might save her from being stormed by want. I know all I can do is but a trifle—a nothing, as a body may say, to folks that are any way above the world, but it may be of use to her for all that; and so, as I hear you are going to look into my master's papers, and to see what can be made out for my poor mistress, I thought it best to tell you to take my pension into the account."

"Your pension, Quinten! and what do you reserve for yourself?"

"Nothing but what I can earn by my own labour. Thank God, I am not yet past working. You see how well I have dressed the Captain's garden. It was I that made that pretty serpentine walk for Miss Julia, and planted all them flowers, of which she used to be so fond. Alas! that I should ever live to see the day of her deserting them! Oh, who would have thought it! such a pretty creature as she was, and so mild-spoken, and so good to every body, that she should after all go for to break her father's heart!"

"Well, but, honest Quinten, you do not consider that you are now in the decline of life, and cannot long be able to labour as you have done."

"I know it, sir. I am growing old apace, but Sam Smith, the old gardener at Beusfield, is ten years older than I am, and he still keeps his place. I am a stouter man than he at any time. And so, dy'e see, I am determined not to touch a farthing of this here Chelsea pension while I am able to lift a spade. Did not I get it by the good word of my master; and who, then, has so good a right to it as his widow? Here are

twelve guineas besides, which, I humbly beg, you would fall on some means to make her accept; for I know she would not touch it, if she thought it came from me. So pray don't let her know who sent it; for folks in affliction ought to be mighty tenderly dealt with, so as not to hurt their pride—*feelings*, I believe, my young mistress would have called it, but I am not learned enough to know the difference.'

"Honest, worthy Quinten!" cried I, grasping his hand, "thou hast a heart that doth honour to thy species, and principles that are more estimable than all the learning in the world. At a period when neither talents nor learning shall avail, thy gratitude and thy virtues shall exalt thee to glory!" I was so struck by the nobleness of this poor fellow's behaviour, that I could not avoid giving you the conversation in detail. I shall be more brief with regard to what followed, though for the honour of your friend I ought there likewise to be particular.

"On examining the books and papers of the deceased, it appeared, that all which remained to the widow was the house and furniture, and twenty-five pounds a year from an annuity-association, of which her husband had been a member. I had planned an application to Mrs. Fielding for doubling this sum, when Mr. Churchill generously stepped forward, and with a delicacy that enhanced the merit of his generosity declared, that though the transaction did not appear in any of the Captain's papers he was trustee for an annuity of an hundred pounds to Mrs. Delmond, which as long as she remained a widow, should be regularly paid at the terms of Lady-Day and Michaelmas.

"I know how you will rejoice in the noble conduct

conduct of your friend, but I believe I should have left the description of it to your sister, whose lively sensibility to all that is great and excellent would have done that justice to the subject of which my tired pen is now incapable. From her own lips, however, you will shortly have an opportunity of receiving it; and I do not think she will suffer any circumstance that attended it to lose in the recital.

“ Sadly shall I feel the dear girl’s absence, whose company is the solace of my heart. The sweetness of her temper, the harmonious cheerfulness of her disposition, might soften the rugged breast of a tyrant, and soothe the most boisterous passions into peace; to me they are enhanced by a mind of quick intelligence, whose cultivation has been the sweetest and the easiest task of my whole life. I must, however, carefully conceal from her the pain her absence shall occasion me; as otherwise, I know all the pleasure Mrs. Fielding has prepared for her would be destroyed. She and her friend Miss Orwell are now busily employed in preparing for their purposed expedition, to which they look forward with the happy ardour of juvenile expectation. The kind consideration of Mrs. Fielding, in inviting Miss Orwell to partake with Maria in the scenes of novelty and amusement, where their reciprocal feelings of surprise and pleasure must enhance their mutual delight, is a new proof of the goodness of her heart. Harriet does not, however, express her relish for the journey in the same manner as Maria. The emotion with which she now speaks of it, is less gay, and apparently more constrained. When first informed that her father had given his consent to her acceptance of Mrs. Fielding’s invitation, she, indeed, appeared

agitated in a greater degree than I should have expected from a girl of her understanding; but that I suppose was from the mere love of novelty, a charm that never fails to operate strongly on the youthful breast. This day fortnight is fixed on for the day of their departure, Dr Orwell is himself to be their escort, and Mr. Churchill likewise proposes being of the party; Mrs. Botherim has delayed her journey, in order to have their company upon the road, so that they will fill two chaises, and, if no accident interposes, have the promise of a pleasant journey.

“ Meantime I shall be left to the enjoyment of my own reflections; but, thank God, these are not disagreeable companions. I can look upon the past with comfort, and to the future without dismay. In the happiness of my children I am more than happy. O may this dearest of all felicities be my companion and my solace through all the short space that now remains for me to tread! May they never cause me a sigh of sorrow, as, thanks to Heaven, they have never tinged my cheeks with the blush of anger or of shame. God bless thee, my dear Harry, prays your tenderly affectionate father,

“ H. SYDNEY.”

P. S. I find I have committed a sad blunder, in telling you of the intended journey to London. It was to have been a secret, it seems, and much pleasure did the girls promise themselves in your surprise. It is in vain I preach to Maria about the sin it would be to deprive you of the pleasure of anticipation, which, alas! makes up such a mighty part of the small sum of human happiness. They insist upon my writing the last part of my letter over again, but my fingers are
already

already cramped, so it must go; and when you read it, you may go to your glass, and tell them how you looked when you see them; for it is their curiosity as to this important point, that I now find to be their reason for secrecy. God help them! poor things! Adieu!

CHAP. XIII.

" — He was a shrewd philosopher,
 " And had read every text and gloss over.
 " Whate'er the crabbed 'st author hath,
 " He understood b' implicit faith.

" All which he understood by rote,
" And as occasion serv'd, wou'd quote."

BUTLER.

“**H**ARRIET Orwell coming up to town by invitation from Mrs. Fielding!” exclaimed Henry. “How extraordinary! Is it in order to gratify my wishes, or to try my prudence, that she at this juncture brings her to London? No matter which; I shall see my Harriet; I shall hear her sweet voice; I shall have the delight of being near her almost continually. Dear Mrs. Fielding, how I bless thee!”

In the midst of this delirium of pleasure, Henry was interrupted by the arrival of Miss Botherim's letter. Of the manner of its reception it is unnecessary to repeat the particulars, as they have already been given so minutely by Jenny, whose faithful report of all that fell from Henry's lips upon the occasion, justly entitles her to our
H 3 applause.

applause. No sooner had he re-delivered the important packet into the hands of Bridgetina's messenger, than he stepped to Mrs. Fielding's, on pretence of informing her of the contents of his father's letter, but in reality to endeavour to penetrate into her motives for inviting Miss Orwell to accompany his sister to London. In vain did he watch her countenance, while she perused that part of the epistle which had caused him such extreme emotion; he only saw it lighted up with a benignant smile. "How much is Maria, how much are we all indebted to your goodness!" cried he; "how happy have you made me—I—mean, how—"

"You mean, I suppose, that it was good-natured of me to provide your sister with a companion, that she might not be altogether confined to the society of an old woman, which you know from experience to be sufficiently tiresome. You see how well I can explain for you."

"The society of Mrs. Fielding must ever——"

"Be superior in your opinion to that of a young and pretty girl, I suppose; but as Maria may be of a different way of thinking, I imagined a companion of her own age would be no disagreeable circumstance to her; and as I wished to pay my old acquaintance, Dr. Orwell, a compliment, I thought I could not do it at an easier rate than by inviting his daughter to spend a few weeks in London. But, pray, who is this Mr. Churchill? He seems a character that is worth the knowing, and I must desire you would introduce him to me whenever he comes to town."

"I shall have a pride in presenting him to you as my earliest and dearest friend; and one I can with confidence, pronounce worthy of the honour of your acquaintance."

"Does he reside at W——?"

"He

“He was brought up by a rich uncle, whose estate surrounds the village, but who was such a miser, that, though Churchill was his only near relation, and a deserved favourite, he could hardly be prevailed upon to afford him the education of a gentleman. My friend’s genius was rather stimulated than repressed by the obstacles which his uncle’s avarice threw in the way of his improvement. His intimacy with me brought him frequently to our house, where his thirst after knowledge was encouraged and gratified by the lessons of my father. The expences attending an university education would for ever have deterred the old gentleman from permitting him to prosecute his studies in a professional manner, had it not fortunately occurred to him, that by having a lawyer in his own family, he might gratify his love of litigation without the expence of a fee.”

‘Admirably calculated! He took care, I presume, that the young gentleman’s studies should not be interrupted by those ingenious contrivances for getting rid of superfluous cash, that occupy so much of the time and talents of our young gentlemen of fashion at the university!’

“Alas! poor Charles! His ingenuity was, indeed, very differently employed. His most rigid economy was necessary to preserve the appearance of a gentleman; and the purchase of books, and attending lectures on such subjects of literature or science as were not immediately connected with his profession, was all stolen from his slender allowance of pocket-money. Yet these circumstances, then considered as so mortifying, he now regards as fortunate. But for these he might have been drawn into the vortex of dissipation, and in the wild career of pleasure have lost his taste for science, and regard to virtue.”

H 4

‘Too

‘Too truly observed,’ said Mrs. Fielding; ‘and in my opinion, the abundance of pocket-money, with which every school-boy is now furnished, has done as much towards the rapid progress of depravity, as any circumstance whatever. I hope your friend’s success at the bar has been equal to his merit.’

“It has at least far exceeded his most sanguine expectations,” returned Henry. “But the honour that has accrued to him from undertaking the cause of a helpless family, who, but for his generous aid, might have perished in obscurity and want, has deservedly raised his reputation into celebrity. Indeed, his whole conduct has given an ample proof that the profession of the law is not necessarily a narrower of the human heart.”

‘Narrow and illiberal must be his heart, that can so pronounce of it,’ returned Mrs. Fielding. ‘It is, like other professions, open to men of unprincipled, as well as to virtuous, minds; and the selfish passions have there, perhaps, as wide a field for their operation as in any other. But, thank heaven, we need not go to the records of former ages, for illustrious instances of lawyers, whose eminent talents have been more than equalled by their exalted virtues.’

Henry again endeavoured to turn the conversation to the subject that engrossed his thoughts, but in vain. He could not obtain from Mrs. Fielding the smallest satisfaction relative to Miss Orwell’s visit: she so sedulously avoided coming to any explanation, that he left her without being able in the least degree to penetrate her intentions.

Leaving Henry to pursue

“The idle phantasies of love.

“Whole miseries delight,”

we

we return to Bridgetina. Her abstract reasoning and most profound reflections on the unenlightened conduct of her lover, received a very unseasonable interruption from Mrs. Benton. That good woman, after a modest preface of many apologies for the liberty she was compelled to take, presented her an account of the sum due for a fortnight's lodging ; which, together with what had been disbursed for other necessaries, amounted to seven guineas.

"Seven guineas !" said Bridgetina ; "it is an unnatural state of civilization, in which seven guineas can be spent so soon. But my mind cannot at present descend to the vulgar concerns of common life. You may leave your bill, however, and when the present romantic, high-wrought, frenzied emotions of my perturbed spirit have a little subsided, I shall enter into an examination of the contents."

"I am extremely sorry to disturb you, Madam," returned Mrs. Benton, "but shall be really much obliged to you, if you can possibly make it convenient to settle it at present. I make a point of paying all our trades-people so regularly, that I shall be quite distressed at not being able to discharge the butcher's bill, and he is to return for the money in the evening."

"Regularity," rejoined Bridgetina, "is a characteristic of common honesty, that *non-conductor to all the sympathies of the human heart ; that infallible proof of mediocrity, to which it is impossible that any thing great, magnanimous, or ardent, can be allied.*"* Punctuality in the discharge of one's debts is held in deserved contempt by the illustrious and eccentric part of mankind ;

H 5

• See Enquirer.

kind ; in whose eye common honesty is a nuisance, reprobated and abhorred."

"It is, indeed, as you say, Ma'am, but common honesty to pay one's debts ; and too often is it neglected by those who ought to set a better example. Oh, if my daughters and I were but regularly paid for our embroidery by the fine ladies for whom we work, we should then be but too happy, for we should then have nothing to care for. But great folks do not know the degree of misery they often inflict by their carelessness ; they are too highly exalted out of the sphere (as one may say) of their fellow-creatures to cast a thought upon the difficulties of those who are to earn their bread by labour. I myself know ladies who never refuse to open their purses to charity, but who, if they had paid their tradesmen with punctuality, might have preserved some honest families from ruin."

"Want of punctuality has for time immemorial supplied materials for invective against great and extraordinary characters," returned Bridgetina. It is, as I said before, a breach of common honesty ; and greatly is it to be regretted, that common honesty should so long have gained the applause of an injudicious world. But when mankind shall have been sufficiently enlightened by philosophy, utterly to discard the ignoble prejudices of religion, regard to common honesty will cease. Blessed æra ! when a fair character shall be no longer deemed essential ! When promises shall be no longer binding ! And when men who have *practically proved themselves the pests and enemies of their species*, shall be estimated according to their energies ; and for acts, which would in the present
 attempted

* See Enquirer.

distempered state of civilization, be deemed worthy of the gallows, receive the applause due to their *eminent talents and uncommon generosity!*"

'I cannot express myself so finely as you do, Ma'am, but I believe what you observe is very just; that though morals are badly enough attended to at present, God knows, yet if religion were banished from the world, (which Heaven forbid!) it would be far worse.' Again laying the bill before Bridgetina on the table, she begged her to peruse it at her leisure, and after making a second apology for her intrusion, left the room.

"Unnatural state of civilization!" cried Bridgetina, as soon as she was alone; "Odious and depraved society, where every thing one eats, or drinks, or wears, must necessarily be paid for! Oh, wise and enlightened Hottentots! ye alone of all mankind have attained to that state of perfection so charmingly described by the philosopher! where the evils of co-operation are avoided, where pecuniary rewards for labour are unknown, and a blessed state of equality gives vigour to the intellect, and rouses the sublime energies of the soul. Oh, that I were in the midst of the Gonoquais horde! there no mercenary demand for the rent of my lodgings; no fares to hackney-coachmen, no bills from laundresses, nor butchers, nor bakers, nor grocers, nor shoemakers, nor chandlers, nor glovers, would interrupt the sublime speculations of my towering fancy; but each congenial Hottentot, energizing in his self-built shed, would be too much engrossed by forming projects for general utility to break in upon my repose!"

Some hours were thus spent by our heroine in deprecating the odious institutions of the society in which it was unhappily her lot to live, before she thought of any method of extricating herself from

from her present embarrassment. It at length, however, very fortunately occurred to her recollection, that she had, on the day of her fruitless application to the city knight, observed the words *Money Lent* inscribed upon the door-posts of a shop in Oxford-street.

“Happy circumstance!” cried she, as soon as the thought occurred; “How fortunate was it, that by taking that road to the city, I should become acquainted with the abode of this philanthropist. Thus it is that events generate each other! Had Alexander the Great never bathed in the Cydnus, Shakespeare would never have written * Had I gone by the Strand, I might not have known, that even in this depraved and unnatural state of civilization, men are to be found, who, convinced of the immoral tendency of accumulation, promote the glorious æra of equality by distributing their superfluous wealth. Let me hasten to the abode of this enlightened person, who will doubtless deem it a duty to supply my wants.”

Delighted with this idea, she hastily threw on her cloak, and proceeded without delay to the place where the advertisement had arrested her attention. The place was easily found. She entered, and instantly demanded an audience of the enlightened personage who had notified the generous intention of lending money. His wife was the person to whom she addressed herself; who told her, that Mr. Poppem was then engaged with a customer in the parlour, but that she could do her business equally well.

“My business,” replied Bridgetina, “is to converse with the man you call your husband; for

• See Pol. Jus.

for that he is your husband I can scarcely suppose, as it is little likely that a philosopher, who is convinced of the immoral tendency of accumulation, should give encouragement to a monopoly so pernicious as marriage."

'Dy'e mean to tell me, that I am not an honest woman?' cried the shopkeeper's wife in an enraged voice.

"An honest woman is a very mean and vulgar appellation for a person who acts upon principles of abstract virtue," rejoined Bridgetina. "I make no doubt that your virtues are sublime; and it is the high idea I have conceived of Mr. Poppem's, that now brings me here. Pray let him know, that a person of no mean energies wishes to converse with him."

The sight of Bridgetina's large gold watch, which, in spite of the change of fashion, she still wore suspended from her apron string by its massy chain of the same precious metal, operated as a more powerful pacifier of the good woman's resentment than all the arguments of philosophy. Without farther hesitation, she conducted our heroine to the inner chamber of Mr. Poppem, a place peculiarly dedicated to the mysteries of his profession; where, like a bronze statue that has been accidentally pushed into some ill-afforted wardrobe, he sat half-hid from view by piles of gowns, petticoats, great-coats, &c. A wretched-looking female stood before him, with a half-starved infant in her arms.

"And will you really give no more?" cried the suppliant in a feeble voice.

'No more!' returned Poppem; 'no, not a shilling more, if it was to save you from the gallows. There's ne'er a pawn-broker in London would ha'gi'n you the half on't on that there trash; so you may take up your money, and be gone.'

"I must

"I must so!" returned the woman, with a heavy sigh; and taking up a few shillings that lay on a small table, she pressed her infant to her breast. "Yes, dearest," said she, "you shall now have bread!" The child turned up its languid eyes to her pale face, which was bedewed with tears. She again pressed it to her bosom, and departed.

'I beg your pardon, Miss,' cried Mr. Poppem, on perceiving Bridgetina. 'I purtest I have been so bothered by that there woman, and her tales of a cock and bull, that I did not observe you. These sort of paupers are such troublesome people to have any dealings with, that for my share, I declare I never wish to see one of them enter my shop. But pray, what is your demand, Miss?'

"I come, enlightened citizen," replied Bridgetina, "I come to inform myself of your motives, to enquire into your principles, and to convince you that I am entitled to a share in the property which, I make no doubt, it is your study to distribute according to the unerring rules of moral justice."

'Justice!' returned the pawn-broker; 'What d'ye mean by justice? I never was before any justice, but Justice Trap, in all my life; and then no one dared to say that black was the white of my eye. I stand upon my character. I deal upon the fair and the square. All open and above-board. I am no refetter of stolen goods—no abettor of robbery—no——'

"I understand you," said Bridgetina, interrupting him. "The unequal distribution of property may, fundoubtedly, be termed a robbery; and *all existing abuses are to be deprecated only as they serve to increase and perpetuate the inequality of conditions.**

When

* See Pol. Jus. vol. ii.

When mankind are sufficiently illuminated, every person, possessed of property, will act as you, Mr. Poppem, now do. What I want particularly to know, is your mode of estimating the worth of individuals; or, in other words, the criterion by which you judge of capacity?"

'Produce the pledge, Miss,' said Mr. Poppem; 'and if I don't estimate it as fairly as e'er a pawn-broker in London, you shall ha' the money for nothing.'

"What proof of powers or energies can the narrow limits of one short conversation afford?" returned Bridgetina. "I am, however, prepared to discuss, to investigate, to argue, to energize, to——"

Here the voice of a person in the front-shop attracted the attention of our heroine. She stopped to listen, and instantly recognized the peculiar dialect of her townsman, Mr. Glib. "How fortunate!" cried she opening the slight door that separated the place she was in from the outer shop. "See how events generate each other!" holding out her hand to Mr. Glib.

'Ha! Citizeness Botherim!' cried Glib. 'How do, chuck? Glad to see you. Didn't think to meet ye here, though. Doit not come to Pop, surely?'

Bridgetina immediately informed her brother illumine of the motives of her visit to Mr. Poppem, at which he laughed so immoderately as to incur no small degree of our heroine's resentment.

'Can't help it, for my soul,' cried Glib, breaking into another immoderate fit of laughter. 'Take a pawn-broker for a philosopher! How comical! But never mind; better than us come for cash. Can't help me to any? Cursedly out at elbows. Citizen Vall no better than a scoundrel:

drel. Sold my books to Lackington, and gone off with the cash. Left me without a sixpence. Can lend me five pounds, I hope.'

"No, really," returned Bridgetina, "I have not at present so much as five shillings in my possession, and came here in hopes of receiving a supply for myself."

'So you can,' returned Glib. 'Get it on your watch. No watches among the Hottentots. No baubles, nor trinkets, nor gewgaws, in a reasonable state of society. Give it to me. Get you the money in a twinkling. How much dost want?'

"Ten guineas will do for my immediate exigencies," replied Bridgetina, putting the watch into his hands.

'Say no more,' cried Glib. 'Shalt have it in a moment.' Then skipping across the shop, he entered Mr. Poppem's apartment without ceremony, and in a few minutes returned with fifteen pounds and a duplicate. The latter he put into the hands of Bridgetina, with the ten-pound note. 'Ten will serve your turn,' said he, and five is just what I want myself. Shall pay it in a trice.'

"But when?" cried Bridgetina, perceiving him about to leave her. "When shall I see you? I shall want the money in a few days, and you do'nt know where to find me."

"Never make promises," cried Glib. 'Nothing so immoral. Damps my energies to see a creditor. Preserve your energies, my dear. That's it! Energies do all!' So saying he skipped out of the shop, and mingling with the croud, was quickly out of sight.

Bridgetina, forgetting at that moment the immoral tendency of punctuality, was extremely disconcerted

disconcerted by the sudden departure of Glib without a promise of repayment. The illuminated citizen's contempt of common honesty she knew to be as far superior to her own, as practice is to theory; but though she ought, upon her own principles, to have made a point of conceding to him the larger sum, as being the more deserving individual, yet either through the operation of some latent prejudice or of some pre-disposing causes generated in the eternity that preceded her birth, she felt more inclined at that moment to relieve the pressing difficulties of her own situation, than to pay attention to the probably still more pressing difficulties by which he was embarrassed. Replete with chagrin and disappointment, she slowly returned to her lodgings; and having discharged Mrs. Benton's bill, retired to her own apartment, to muse in solitude and silence on the many miseries that overspread the barren wilderness of society.

CHAP. XIV.

"He little recks the woes which wait
 "To scare his dreams of joy;
 "Nor thinks to-morrow's alter'd fate
 "May all those dreams destroy."

MRS. HANNAH MORE.

SLOWLY, in the opinion of Henry, did the hours move on, till the day that brought his sister and her fair companion to London. At length the sun arose that was to light them on
 their

their journey, and never did astronomer with more anxiety watch its progress on the day of the transit of a planet, than did Henry on this occasion. He had formed the design of meeting them at Barnet, and having ordered his servant to procure horses, mounted about three o'clock, and set off full speed, in hopes of surprising them by his appearance at the Red-Lion, which he expected to reach before their arrival.

The day had been unusually fine for the season, but by the time he had got to Highgate, the sky became obscured, and a thick fog gradually spread over the face of the country. Cheered by the prospect in his "mind's eye," he pushed forward, and having obtained the rising ground in the middle of Finchley-Common, observed with palpitating delight the approach of two post-chaises, which he doubted not contained the friends he was in quest of. Riding briskly up to the first of the carriages, the glasses of which were all up, he called to the postilion to stop. The post-boy obeyed. Immediately the front glass was let down, and the kindly greetings of Henry answered by the firing of a pistol! At the same moment two persons leaped from the carriage, and holding their pistols to the supposed highwayman, laid hold of the bridle, which had dropped from his hand.

"Have you enough?" cried one of the gentlemen.

'Yes,' returned Henry; 'and when you have discovered your mistake, you will probably think I have had too much.'

Henry's servant being neither so well mounted as his master, nor inspired with an equal degree of impatience, had fallen considerably behind. He darted forward at the report of the pistol,
and

and seeing his master (as he imagined) in the hands of footpads, he called out for help.

The gentleman who had fired the pistol, had, from the appearance of Henry, and still more from his manner of speaking, begun to have some apprehensions of his mistake. The appearance of the servant gave additional strength to his surmises.

"Wherefore did you stop the carriage?" cried he, in a voice rather less violent than his former tone.

"I expected to meet with friends," said Henry, "and confess I owe the accident entirely to my own imprudence. Whatever may be its consequences, you, sir, are acquitted of all blame."

"Curse on my rashness!" cried the gentleman; "but I hope, sir, you are not much hurt?"

"Not mortally, I trust," returned Henry. "From my feelings, I should suppose the ball to be lodged in my shoulder: the wound in my arm will signify nothing."

"A brave fellow, by my shoul!" exclaimed a person who at that moment came up from the second carriage. "I hope you will soon be after settling the matter honourable, my dear, and be able to call him to account for taking a highwayman for a gentleman."

"I can only blame my own imprudence," said Henry.

"You may forgive me," said the gentleman, grasping Henry's hand; "but I never shall forgive myself. But let us not delay. My servant shall ride your horse, while you take his place in the carriage with me. I shall be miserable till the wound has been examined. Pray let us make haste."

"The

‘The gentleman may do as he pleases,’ said the other traveller, ‘but by my shoul, my dear, when you travel through the county of Galway you had better take care how you pop at a gentleman, without giving him a chance of returning your fire!’

“I shall accept your offer with pleasure, sir,” said Henry, without paying any attention to his observation, “and hope I shall have reason to rejoice in the accident, as giving me the acquisition of a friend.”

The Irishman shrugged up his shoulders, and returned to his chaise; while Henry, with the assistance of the stranger, dismounted from his horse, and had placed his foot upon the step of the chaise, when the rattling noise of carriages advancing quickly towards them attracted his attention. It was now so dark, that they were quite near before they could be distinctly seen.

‘Has any accident happened?’ cried a voice, which Henry knew to be Doctor Orwell’s.

“None that is of any consequence,” said Henry, approaching the carriage.

‘It is Doctor Sydney!’ cried Harriet.

“Doctor Sydney!” repeated her father; “I hope no disaster—”

‘A slight accident only,’ said Henry: ‘which I shall inform you of at leisure, if you will have the goodness to make room for me.’

“Yes, surely!” said they both at once. “Maria is behind,” added the Doctor, “your appearance will alarm her, so pray step in immediately.”

Henry assented; and taking a hasty leave of the stranger, placed himself by the side of Harriet, whose emotion was too apparent to escape the penetrating eyes of love. In a voice expressive of the tenderest solicitude, she enquired into the
nature

nature of the accident that had befallen him. Henry gave an evasive answer to her interrogatories, and turned the conversation; which, in spite of the pain he suffered, he continued to support with all that spirited animation the presence of a beloved object naturally inspires.

In the middle of a sprightly rally, he was stopped by a scream from Harriet. 'Ah! Sydney,' cried she, 'you are wounded! you are desperately wounded. My cloak is covered with blood.'

Henry, finding it was in vain any longer to attempt deceiving her, gave a faithful account of all that had happened; and was amply repaid for the anguish of his wound, by the interest Harriet evidently took in his misfortune.

On stopping at the door of Henry's lodgings, whither it had been agreed to drive, the stranger, whose rashness had occasioned the unlucky accident, presented himself, and with him an eminent surgeon, with whom Sydney was well acquainted; and who was the very person he had thought of sending for on the occasion.

Such generous ardour to repair an injury he had unintentionally committed, excited the admiration of Sydney, who, in suitable terms, thanked him for his attention; and then proceeded with him and Doctor Orwell to his own apartment, to submit the wound to the examination of the surgeon.

Harriet's heart sunk within her, at the idea of the pain he must necessarily undergo; in vain did she endeavour to exert her fortitude. When the carriage stopped in Hanover-square, she was too much agitated to alight. The second chaise drove up, and Maria, Mr. Churchill, and Mrs. Botherin had descended from it and come up to her,

her, before she had sufficiently recollected her scattered spirits, to be able to form any excuse for her father's absence.

Alarmed at the appearance of her emotion, Maria earnestly entreated to know the cause; but without taking any notice of her questions, she hastily followed Mrs. Botherim into the house, where Mrs. Fielding received them with that happy mixture of cordiality and politeness which denotes the union of good-breeding and benevolence.

Henry's servant had communicated the news his master's misfortune at Mrs. Fielding's a few minutes before the arrival of his friends, and had thereby excited a degree of alarm and anxiety, which was still visible in that good lady's countenance. The similar feelings of Harriet did not escape her notice; and by exciting a degree of interest and compassion, gave a stronger impression in her favour than all the graces of her person, or beauty of her countenance, could have produced.

The shock which Maria received from the intelligence was sufficiently severe, though mitigated by the confidence she reposed in the veracity of her friends; which she knew to be of too genuine a nature to admit of their imposing upon her by any of those *kind lies*, which are often so liberally dispensed upon similar occasions. Doctor Orwell's report was extremely favourable. The ball, he told them, had been extracted without difficulty, and the wound, in the opinion of the surgeon, so little serious, that it would only occasion a few days confinement.

Maria's anxious desire to visit her brother was indulged by Mrs. Fielding, who kindly ordered her own chair to attend her. Mr. Churchill, as
he

he handed her into it, whispered a wish that it had been a more sociable conveyance ; Maria did not frown, nor was she, possibly, much displeased at seeing him walk beside it to Henry's door.

While Maria and Churchill were on this charitable visit, poor Mrs. Botherim was employed in giving Mrs. Fielding a circumstantial detail of all she had suffered from Bridgetina's absence ; interspersed with many bitter reflections on the wicked people, and still more wicked books, that had led her daughter astray. " Yes," cried she, Ma'am, as I was telling you, I now knows for certain it is all along of them there people as comes to Mr. Glib's, who I thought, all the time, (God help me) to be the most learned and the most wisest people in the world. It is true, I did not understand much of the meaning of what they said ; for what should I know of perfebility, and cowfation, and all them there things ? But had I known that they meant to make children unnatural, and undutiful to their parents, they should never have been uttered in my house, I promise ye."

'It is, indeed, to be regretted,' said Mrs. Fielding, 'that Miss Botherim should have been so unfortunate in the choice of her books and friends. It could not be expected from Miss Botherim, that with her limited opportunities of information she should be able to detect the pernicious tendency of the opinions she so unhappily embraced.'

" Ah ! Madam," returned Mrs. Botherim, " you have no sort of notion how learned she was. I do assure you, she has read as many books as e'er a parson in the kingdom. The histories of lords and counts, and colonels and ladies of quality, was what she pored on from morning

morning till night. And then she got them there *Metam Physics* in whole volumes, as big as the church bible; all written, as she told me, by that *General Utility*, as she called him. I'm sure I shall hate the name of him as long as I live."

Mrs. Fielding could not help smiling at the simplicity of this account. 'I am afraid, my good Madam,' said she, 'that the sort of reading you first alluded to, was a very bad preparative for the latter. To an imagination enflamed by an incessant perusal of the improbable fictions of romance, a flight into the regions of metaphysics must rather be a dangerous excursion. I am afraid Miss Botherim has gone too far astray in the fields of imagination to be easily brought back to the plain path of common sense.'

"I should hope," said Doctor Orwell, "that a little reflection would make her sensible of the fallacy of opinions, which have invariably proved fatal to all who have so far adopted, as to make them a principle of action."

'Yes, my dear Madam,' said Mrs. Botherim, 'do pray tell her of the consequences. Bid her think of poor Miss Delmond, who has been ruined, and deluded, and ticed away by a fellow, who, for all his fine talk, is no better than a shabby hair-dresser. And—'

Here the entrance of Bridgetina, who had been sent for by Mrs. Fielding, put an end to the good lady's harangue. Her affection for her daughter so far outweighed her resentment, that the former only appeared in her reception. Throwing her arms round her neck, she exclaimed in broken accents, while tears flowed from her eyes, 'My Biddy! my dear Biddy! you will not leave your poor mother again? No, no, you cannot be so cruel. You shall do just whatever you

you please, and have the command of all I have in the world, if you will but stay with me to comfort my old age. I am sure,' added she, sobbing, 'I am sure I never contradicted you in my life—you cannot say that I did.'

"It would have been quite counter to the proper order of things, if you had," returned Bridgetina. "To a perfectible being every species of coercion is improper, and as contradiction is a species of coercion, it necessarily follows that—"

'There!' cried Mrs. Botherim, holding up her clasped hands in agony, 'there, now! she is at it again! Just the old story! all them there fine words over again, as pat as the day she first learned them. O, Biddy! Biddy! would ye but speak in a way that a body could understand!'

"If I were to speak to your comprehension, mother," returned Bridgetina, "I must descend indeed! A mind that is illumined like mine——"

'Come, come, Miss Botherim,' said Doctor Orwell, 'don't think you will add to your dignity by lessening your parent. I, for my share, know no good of any illumination that does not shew itself in the conduct. And in that, my dear, your mother has the advantage of you; as she has never been guilty of any glaring impropriety.'

"The person, sir, who would energise in no vulgar manner must prepare herself for encountering obloquy and censure," retorted Bridgetina.

'And pray, my dear, what entitles you to be superior to obloquy and censure? What right have you to think, that a line of conduct, condemned by the general suffrage of mankind, and which, if it were universally to prevail, would

prove destructive to the peace and happiness of society, should escape reprehension?"

"The prejudices which spring from the odious institutions of an ill-constituted society," said Bridgetina, "ought to be despised by every person capable of soaring to a sublime morality, founded on abstract reasoning."

"And it is this sublime morality, founded on abstract reasoning, which teaches you to neglect, or to despise, the performance of every duty belonging to your situation?" returned the Doctor. "It is *it* which teaches you to forsake an indulgent parent, who has made your happiness the study of her whole life; and in return for the tender care she has bestowed on your infancy and youth, to leave her old age to solitude and sorrow. It is this sublime morality, founded on abstract reasoning, which has likewise, I suppose, taught you to break through every law of delicacy and decorum, and shamelessly to offer yourself to prostitution? Such have been the fruits of this *sublime morality*, which arrogantly pretends to excel that of the Gospel!"

"I have somewhere heard reasoning termed *the arithmetic of words*," said Mrs. Fielding. "Where the sum total is so monstrous, I think we may confidently pronounce that there has been some error in the calculation. Of this, I have no doubt, Miss Botherim will become fully sensible, when she takes a wide and impartial view of the consequences."

"Aye!" cried Mrs. Botherim, "let her take a view of Mr. Glib's poor ragged children in the parish workhouse, whom their father has left to starve, because, forsooth, a man should have no regard for his own flesh and blood! And let her see what is become of their mother—gone off, like

like a huffey, with a recruiting officer! Pretty consequences, truly! To say nothing of the death of that worthy gentleman, Captain Delmond, who died of a broken heart, if ever man did; and I am sure I do not wonder at his doing so, for what touches the heart of a parent equal to the undutifulness of a darling child? Woe is me that I should live to speak this from experience! But, indeed, Biddy, I shall never recover your unkindness.'

Notwithstanding the philosophy of Bridgetina, she could not help being affected by the tears of her mother. Mrs. Fielding, perceiving the impression that they made upon her, thought it best to leave them some time to themselves. She arose, and taking a hand of each, led them to the adjoining apartment, saying, "that after so long a separation they had probably many things to communicate that would be best discussed in a *tête-a-tête*."

The endeavours of Mrs. Fielding to reconcile our heroine to return to her mother were forcibly seconded by the mortifying circumstances of her situation. Without money, without friends, without any remaining hopes of success in the great object of her wishes, she began to think that she had rather been too precipitate in her anticipation of the practices of *The Age of Reason*; and that in the present deplorable state of things, a young woman might be excusable in remaining under the protection of her relations, though she escaped the glory of moral martyrdom by doing so.

A thousand times since she left W—— had she sensibly felt the want of those little tender attentions, which her fond mother had ever been so ready to bestow. She had been sick—

and found no one interested in her recovery. Mrs. Benton had, indeed, attended her as much as her business would allow; but her attentions fell far short of the anxious solicitude of a parent, who, on the slightest indisposition, had been alarmed for her safety. Nor had she been able to eradicate from her breast the feelings of filial affection; feelings, which the unexpected meeting with her mother had powerfully revived. And as she had now little prospect of soon seeing any of those who were sufficiently enlightened, to condemn her for this returning weakness, she was easily prevailed upon to oblige the old lady, by consenting to accompany her back to W——.

Overjoyed at this instance of condescension, Mrs. Botherin willingly undertook to discharge all the debts contracted by her daughter; and having gratefully thanked Mrs. Fielding for her kind attention, departed with Bridgetina to Mrs. Benton's.

CHAP. XV.

"Beware of Jealousy!"

SHAKESPEARE.

MRS. Fielding's intention of sending to enquire for Henry on the following morning was anticipated by Doctor Orwell, whose report was so favourable as to infuse cheerfulness into the countenances of the circle, now assembled at breakfast.

In talking over the disaster of the preceding evening, Dr. Orwell mentioned the gentleman who had been the unfortunate occasion of it, by the name of Carradine.

"Has

"Has he ever been in India," asked Mrs. Fielding, eagerly.

"I believe he has," returned the Doctor.

"Then," said Mrs. Fielding, "I make no doubt he is the son of one of my oldest and most intimate friends. Through the interest of Lady Brierston I procured this boy a cadet's appointment on the Bengal establishment, about fourteen years ago; but of me, it is probable, he now retains not any remembrance."

Mrs. Fielding was mistaken. While she yet spoke, Mr. Carradine was announced. He had, through Henry Sydney, heard of her living in London, and no sooner heard it, than with all that ardour which was the prominent feature of his character, he hastened to pay his respects to his acknowledged benefactress. Mrs. Fielding received this testimony of his gratitude with a satisfaction equal to the interest she took in the welfare of the son of her friend. She heard with pleasure of his success in India, which had far exceeded his most sanguine expectations; and was still more highly gratified by learning, that that success had enabled him to make a handsome provision for two orphan sisters. He had come over to pay a visit to the eldest of these, upon her marriage, and his leave of absence being now nearly expired, was on the eve of again taking his departure for the East.

In speaking of the misfortune occasioned by his rashness the preceding evening, he expressed himself with so much feeling on account of Henry, and such a generous condemnation of his own impetuosity, as not only reconciled Mrs. Fielding, but even divested Maria of all inclination to impute to him the least degree of blame. Harriet was, on this occasion, somewhat behind her friends in point of generosity. As the per-

son by whom the life of Henry had been exposed to danger, she could not help viewing Mr. Carradine with a degree of dislike; nor was her dislike diminished by finding herself the object of his particular attention. That she was so, was evident almost from the very moment of his entrance; and the avidity with which he accepted Mrs. Fielding's invitation to dinner, might, perhaps, be as justly attributed to the power of attraction as to the impulse of gratitude.

This young man, whose quick and lively feelings had, by early indulgence, been fostered into uncontrollable impetuosity, was the willing slave of impulse; but though frequently led astray by his capricious guide, his errors were more than compensated by the virtues of his heart. Open, generous, and sincere, he was still more fervent in his friendships than in his enmities; and equally prompt to confer an obligation, as to resent an injury. The impression made upon his mind by the first appearance of Miss Orwell, was augmented into intoxication before the end of the evening; nor was this delirium of love in the least checked by the apparent coldness of her manners. Little accustomed to intercourse with the sex, he was a stranger to that delicacy of sentiment which renders an union of minds essential to happiness; and having gathered from conversation in the course of the day, that Miss Orwell's fortune consisted chiefly in her charms and virtues, he retired elate with hope, and fully confident of success.

On the following morning he returned to escort the ladies to an exhibition of paintings, to which Mrs. Fielding had mentioned an intention of carrying her young friends on the preceding evening. Harriet would willingly have been
excused,

excused, but she was such a novice in the modern school of female manners, that she did not consider herself at liberty to indulge every wayward humour, or to disconcert the pleasure of a party for the gratification of her own feelings. She therefore concealed her repugnance, and only begged Maria not to quit her side. Maria promised, and no doubt intended to comply with her request; but Mr. Churchill knew so well the paintings that were particularly suited to her taste, and took such pains to point them out, that in the fervour of her admiration of the pieces to which he directed her attention, she was insensibly drawn to another part of the room. Dr. Orwell and Mrs. Fielding were mean time engaged in conversation, so that Harriet found herself left to the care of Mr Carradine; who, without considering the character to whom he addressed himself, employed the opportunity thus afforded him to pour out that profusion of exaggerated compliment, which he had been taught to consider as the most acceptable offering to the ear of beauty.

Tired by his assiduity, and provoked by his perseverance, she hastened to where Mrs. Fielding and her father had procured seats. Just as she approached them, Dr. Orwell resigned his to an elderly lady, whom he heard complain of fatigue. The same complaint was heard by several young men of fashion, who lounged upon the same bench, but heard without producing on their part the smallest effort for her accommodation. The eyes of the same party were now turned on Harriet, who involuntarily shrunk from their familiar stare, and gladly entered into a conversation with Mrs. Fielding, in order to relieve her embarrassment.

The conversation naturally turned on the
 14 paintings,

paintings, on which Harriet gave her opinion with all that ingenuousness and simplicity which belonged to her character. Accustomed to think for herself, she did not hesitate to speak from her feelings; and as she made no pretensions to connoisseurship, would not have been at all mortified at finding that she had been pleased with a piece that was not stamped with the approbation of a connoisseur.

"You seem fatigued, my dear," said Mrs. Fielding; "I wish we could make room for you," looking at the gentlemen, who still kept their seats.

"I beg the young lady may take mine;" said the elderly lady whom Doctor Orwell had accommodated. Harriet declined the offer, and the subject of the paintings was renewed.

"I confess," said Mrs. Fielding, "that I receive peculiar pleasure from such paintings as afford an exercise to the mind. I am not connoisseur enough to be long enraptured with all the charms of light and shade; and though I admire the beauty of that St. Cecilia, I dwell with much more satisfaction on its companion, which gives such a lively representation of the manners of a former age and distant country."

"Tasteless must they be, who can turn their eyes to painted canvases, while animated beauty demands their admiration!" whispered Carradine.

"You are right," said Dr. Orwell to Mrs. Fielding; "and that view of the savages, which hangs opposite to us, has afforded me particular pleasure, from the train of ideas it has excited. No one can view it, and look around, without being convinced how nearly the extremes of barbarism and civilization are united. Do but mark the expression of stupidity and indolence in the
counte-

countenance of that savage who sits at the door of the hut. Methinks he wants but a tooth-pick to make him quite a modern fine gentleman; he seems almost as much insensible to all the moral, natural, and social feelings and enjoyments, as any beau in the room. See with what listless indifference his companion views the females who are placed beside him. How vacant his stare! How rude and brutish does it speak his manners!"

While Dr. Orwell was speaking, Mrs. Fielding accidentally turned her eye from the picture upon the gentlemen who sat beside her. "An't you tired of this horrid place?" said one.

"Tired!" returned his companion; "I have been fatigued to death this half-hour." So saying, they rose with one consent, perhaps determined never more to take their place at an exhibition beside a portrait of savages.

On their return home, Mrs. Fielding stopped the carriage at Henry's door. While Doctor Orwell and Maria were stepping out to enquire for him, "Tell him," said Mrs. Fielding, "that we shall all pay him a visit together, the first evening he is well enough to receive us. Maria soon returned, with earnest intreaties from her brother that the kind promise might be fulfilled that very evening. The request was seconded by Dr. Orwell, on whose judgment Mrs. Fielding so much relied, that she was easily prevailed upon to acquiesce in the proposal.

In the evening they accordingly went, and were received by Henry with the most rapturous gratitude. To Mrs. Fielding he was profuse in his acknowledgments, for her goodness and condescension. To Harriet his eyes only spoke, but they required not any interpreter. In answer to the interrogatories concerning his wound, he

declared it to be a mere scratch, not worth mentioning; and only that it obliged him to keep on his night-gown, would not confine him to his room another day. While Mrs. Fielding was congratulating him on the fortunate issue of an event which had appeared so big with danger, and Harriet smiling delight at the certainty of his recovery, Mr. Carradine entered the room. He instantly seized the vacant chair by the side of Harriet, and to her so exclusively devoted his attentions, that he did not seem to have either eyes or ears for any other object. Unaccustomed to disguise his feelings, he sought not to conceal them; tho' the evident distress of Harriet might have convinced him, that whatever gratification he enjoyed from this open avowal of his partiality, he enjoyed at her expence. In vain did she endeavour by monosyllable answers to weary out his patience, or by frequently addressing Mrs. Fielding or Maria, to turn his attention to the conversation of her friends. He could speak but to her alone, and made such frequent allusions to what passed either in the course of the morning, or during his visit to Mrs. Fielding on the preceding day, as must have impressed any listener with an idea of their being on terms of long-established intimacy.

Trifling was the pain of the wound his hand had given, in comparison of that which his conduct now inflicted on the heart of Henry. He now first felt the torturing pang of jealousy, nor did the behaviour of Harriet quiet his apprehensions. He knew her delicacy, he knew her prudence; and to prudence and delicacy did he solely attribute her seeming indifference to the too evident partiality of her new admirer. But would she continue indifferent to a man, who, emboldened by

by prosperity, addressed her in the stile of confident success? Would she scorn the allurements of ambition, and refuse the offer of affluence from one whose personal accomplishments alone might make an impression on any female heart? "She will," said Hope. "No, no;" said trembling Apprehension, "you have no right to expect it. "Then she is lost to you for ever!" said Despondency.

The pale hue that succeeded the feverish flush on the cheek of Henry, was not unobserved by Mrs. Fielding. "Sydney," said she, "I fear you have over-rated the progress of your recovery. Your wish to see your friends has led you to an exertion beyond your strength; but we must be no longer parties in your indiscretion." She then ordered her carriage, and while Henry endeavoured to assure her that her fears were without foundation, she was, by the changes of his colour, and the faltering of his voice, fully persuaded of their reality.

When Doctor Orwell went to enquire for his young friend on the following morning, he met the surgeon coming out of his apartment, and from him (to his great disquietude) received intelligence of Henry's increased indisposition. A considerable degree of fever had already taken place, which in the course of the day became so alarming, that the surgeon on his next visit in the afternoon proposed calling in the assistance of an eminent physician. Next day he was still worse, and Maria, in anguish of heart, dispatched a messenger to her father with the melancholy tidings.

All the bright visions of expected happiness, with which Maria and her friend had indulged their imaginations while preparing for their jaunt to

to London, were now completely annihilated; and in their place melancholy reflections on the past, or gloomy forebodings of the future, took possession of their minds. From the pressure of these Maria was somewhat relieved by active exertion; but Harriet had no such resource. She had not even the privilege of communicating the sufferings of her anxious heart. They did not, however, escape the penetrating eye of Mrs. Fielding, who, by the most soothing attention, endeavoured to alleviate as much as possible the pain she well knew how to estimate.

A still severer task awaited her—it was the reception of Mr. Sydney; who instantly on the receipt of his daughter's letter had set off for London, and arrived on the day that Henry was pronounced to be in the utmost danger.

Though a period of thirty years had elapsed since Mrs. Fielding had last seen Mr. Sydney, it is probable that time had not so completely obliterated the remembrance of their parting scene, that she could now, without emotion, have gone through the ceremony of the first interview, had not every feeling been absorbed by the object of their mutual anxiety. The same cause would have been productive of the same effects at any period of their acquaintance; for in spite of the supreme dominion ascribed by poets and novelists to the God of Love, (who is represented as the prime mover of every human action, and the omnipotent governor of the breast of every person who has ever felt his power) he is, in fact, a mere sunshine visitor, who skulks away at the first appearance of calamity, and is driven from the heart at the approach of real evil.

Mrs. Fielding, who felt for Henry all the affection of a parent—feelingly participated in the
parent's

parent's affliction. For some days after the arrival of Mr. Sydney, fearful suspense continued to rest on every brow, and to throb in every heart. Harriet to whom the presence of Carradine had been so disagreeable, now watched for his knock at the door with sickening impatience; he, indeed, spent the greatest part of his time in going betwixt Hanover-square and George-street; and by the lively interest he took in Henry's recovery, raised himself not a little in the opinion of his mistress.

Above a week was thus spent. At the end of that period a change took place, which his medical friends pronounced to be a favourable crisis. Harriet was sitting with Mrs. Fielding in her dressing-room, the door of which had been left open, to facilitate the communication of intelligence. Twice had she gone to it on tip-toe, on hearing two several knocks at the hall-door, but was each time disappointed by the appearance of visiting-tickets in the servant's hands.

While he was delivering the last of these to Mrs. Fielding, Carradine rushed in.—“He is out of danger!” cried he; “the physicians declare he is out of danger! But Miss Orwell, why do you not speak? You are not sorry, sure, to hear that Sydney is out of danger? why do you not rejoice?”

“I—I do rejoice!” said Harriet, and burst into a violent flood of tears.

“Good heavens!” exclaimed Carradine, “I thought it would have made you happy to hear the poor fellow was out of danger; but had I known how differently it was to affect you, I would sooner have been shot from the mouth of a cannon than have told you a word of the matter.”

“Good as well as bad news may be declared too abruptly,” said Mrs. Fielding. Then, in order

der to divert his attention from Harriet, she proceeded to ask a number of questions concerning the opinion of the physicians, and the symptoms on which that opinion was founded. Mr. Caradine was but ill qualified to give her information concerning these particulars; but the simple fact that Henry was pronounced out of danger, was a solace to her friendly heart.

CHAP. XVI.

"Reader, attend: Whether thy soul
 "Soars Fancy's flights beyond the pole,
 "Or darkling grubs this earthly hole,
 " In low pursuit;
 "Know prudent, cautious, self-control,
 "Is Wisdom's foot."

BURNS.

THE recovery of Henry was not rapid, but it was unattended by any relapse. No sooner did returning health begin to re-brace the unstrung nerves, and re-invigorate the feeble frame, than the mind reverted to the objects of its former interest; and though (contrary to the usual practice of lovers in similar circumstances) he had not during his delirium once mentioned the name of Harriet, her image now reassumed its wonted place in his breast.

"Maria," said he one day to his sister, as she sat by his bedside, which he was yet too feeble to leave for more than half an hour at a time, "you confine yourself too much to my apartment. Besides the risk of injuring your health, you must embitter the happiness of Miss Orwell by thus perpetually depriving her of your society. But, perhaps, she sees enough of company at
 Mrs.

Mrs. Fielding's to solace her for the absence of her old friends?"

'No, indeed,' returned Maria, 'Mrs. Fielding has received no visitors since you were taken ill; I do not believe that any stranger, except Mr. Carradine, has been within her door.'

"And has Mr. Carradine been often there?"

'O yes, two or three times at least every day.'

"He is, then, quite on a familiar footing in Hanover-square?" said Henry, in a tremulous voice.

'Entirely so,' returned Maria. 'He goes in and out just like one of the family. Indeed, I believe the interest he took in your recovery, and the sensibility he evinced the time you were thought to be in danger, has more endeared him to Mrs. Fielding than if he had been the son of twenty friends. That deep sigh tells me, that I must not yet indulge you in talking; but if you please I shall now read to you a little—'

"I think I had rather sleep," said Henry. Maria drew the curtain, and remained in silence.

The convalescence of Henry was no sooner ascertained, than Doctor Orwell began to think of returning home. And no sooner did Carradine hear of his intention, than he hastened to communicate to him such proposals concerning his daughter as he was well assured could not fail to meet his approbation. Having entered the Doctor's dressing-room in a manner sufficiently abrupt to have created some alarm in a person of weak nerves, he thus opened the conference. 'Doctor Orwell, your daughter is a charming girl! by my soul, I do not believe there is such a lovely girl in England!'

"You do my daughter great honour, sir," said the Doctor, smiling at his odd manner of expressing a truth which he himself had, however,

ever, no difficulty in believing. Harriet is surely much obliged to you for the compliment."

"Not at all," returned Carradine, "not obliged to me at all. I would not love her if I could help it, but I cannot help it; and I do love her with all my heart. Ten thousand pounds is what I mean to settle on her. Tell me, if that will answer your expectations?"

"Really, sir, I do not well understand you. Your proposal is made in a manner so abrupt, and was so truly unexpected, that you must forgive me if I cannot give it an immediate answer."

"Nothing can be plainer than my proposal," rejoined Carradine. "I love your daughter, and will marry her without a shilling, making her a settlement of ten thousand pounds, which shall be entirely at her own disposal."

"And is it with Harriet's knowledge that you now apply to me on this business?"

"No, Miss Orwell, notwithstanding we have now been acquainted for almost a fortnight, has never yet given me an opportunity of talking to her on the subject."

"And do you really think, that on a fortnight's acquaintance the character of any person can be sufficiently developed, to warrant entering with them into a connection that is indissoluble?"

A fortnight! Why I have known many very happy marriages take place in Bengal upon an acquaintance of less than half the time. I remember the time, when every fresh cargo of imported beauties used to go off as fast as they were seen. Now, to be sure, the market is rather overstocked; and many a fine girl remains on hands for the length of a whole season. But as to making up one's mind upon the business, that can be done in half an hour as well as in half a century."

"You

"You astonish me!" cried Dr. Orwell, "I have indeed heard of young women's going out to India with a view, no doubt, to get established in marriage. But that whole cargoes should go out in that manner, as to a regular market, I really should not, but from good authority, have credited. Surely they can only be some poor, unfortunate, and friendless girls, who have neither parents nor protectors at home, that are driven to such desperate methods of obtaining a provision?"

'Pardon me,' replied Carradine, 'the greatest number who now come out are sent by their parents and protectors; and, in general, the speculation is not a bad one.'

"Is it possible," cried Doctor Orwell, "that any parent should be so depraved, as to expose his child to a situation so humiliating! How lost to all that conscious dignity which enhances every female charm; how lost to every sentiment of delicacy must she become, who is thus led to make a barter of herself! My mind revolts at the idea!"

'Does the distance of the market, then, make such a mighty difference?' said Carradine. 'Really, my dear sir, that is an objection merely imaginary. The voyage is a trifle; and as to the conscious dignity, and all that, I do assure you, that so far from its being lost by going to India, I have there seen many a girl who, at an English watering-place, would have been glad to flirt with an ensign, get so proud and saucy in the space of a few weeks, that she would not deign to speak to a subaltern! The reason is plain—In India the number of European ladies is still so small, in proportion to the gentlemen, that they are *there* of some consequence. But here they are hawked about in such quantities at every place

place of public resort, that if the poor things did not lay themselves out to court attention, they would have no chance of being taken notice of.'

"Better remain unnoticed for ever, than be so degraded!" said Doctor Orwell, with vehemence. "For my part," continued he, "though the increasing prevalence of luxury and false pride, and false notions of true dignity, tend to render poverty an evil of mighty magnitude to a helpless female, I had rather see my daughters reduced to the necessity of earning their bread, than behold them raised to the highest pinnacle of fortune by such methods as you have described."

'*Your daughter!* my dear sir. Oh, she is a being of a superior order. Tell me but that you consent she shall be mine, and by all that's sacred she shall be as happy a woman—aye, and trust me, as much respected as the wife of any man in Europe.'

"I must repeat it again," replied the Doctor, "that I am no friend to hasty connexions. We are frequently taught by experience, that where the general character is on both sides good, an unconformity of temper, or dissimilarity of taste, is sufficient to embitter the tenor of existence. And how on a short acquaintance can we form that knowledge of the disposition which prudence requires, in order to give a chance for happiness?"

'As to temper, I do assure you no one ever found fault with mine. Let Miss Orwell enquire of my friends, and they will tell her that I am the best-natured fellow in the world. A little hasty, or so, perhaps, but then it is over in a moment; and I vow to God I never shall be in a passion with her. How could I, with such an angel! Believe me, sir, we shall be one of the happiest couples in the world.'

Doctor

Doctor Orwell smiled. "Well, but Mr. Carradine, if you had my consent, pray have you any reason to conclude that Harriet's is certain?"

"No, I really cannot say that I am sure of that. But when she knows how good a husband I shall make, and sees that you are very much inclined to the match, I do not despair of prevailing on her to make me happy. She is so sweet, and so compassionate, that I do not think she could have the cruelty to inflict misery upon any mortal. I never saw any creature possessed of a heart so tender! Why she could not even hear mention made of what poor Sydney suffered, without always changing colour; and I have more than once observed the silent tear steal softly down her cheek, even while a smile sat upon her countenance. And what is the anguish of a thousand fevers, in comparison of what I should feel in losing her?"

"I hope, that if my daughter should be so cruel," said Doctor Orwell, "there is little reason to apprehend any *danger* from the misfortune; and that in the smiles of some other beauty all your wounds will soon be healed."

"I shall never speak to another beauty in my life;" replied Carradine, warmly. "I shall embark for India in the first ship; and do you think, that after having contemplated the unaffected loveliness of Miss Orwell, endeared by sweetness, and exalted by the utmost refinement of sentiment and gracefulness of manners, I shall have any taste for the insipid morsels of foil and froth that I am there likely to meet with? No, no; if I return to India without a wife, I shall go back to poor Mirza; tho' besides the burthen of so many dingy brats, there is plaguy little comfort in a connection that affords neither friendship nor society."

Here

Here the conversation was interrupted by the sudden entrance of Mrs. Botherim, who, with a heavy heart, came to complain to Doctor Orwell of the untoward disposition of her daughter. As many years had elapsed since the good lady had visited London, she had thought it proper to take the present opportunity of renewing her acquaintance with the few friends of her childhood who were still in existence; and had accepted an invitation to take up her residence, while she remained in town, at the house of a relation, for whose family she anxiously wished her daughter to cultivate an affection. It was of her behaviour to these friends that she now came to complain, which she did with great bitterness; and concluded with intreating Doctor Orwell to visit them, and point out to Bridgetina the impropriety of her behaviour towards people whose character she represented as extremely amiable, and whose conduct had in some respects been highly meritorious. The Doctor readily promised compliance with her request, and as soon as she departed, hastened to Harriet's apartment, to talk to her about the proposals of Carradine.

The subject did not bear much discussion. It was decided by Harriet in a moment. Her objections were pointed out with so much judgment, and supported with so much firmness, as left no room to expect a change of sentiment.

"Well, my dear," said the Doctor, "I cannot say that I am sorry for your refusal of this young man; particularly, as I do not believe your refusal of him proceeds from any romantic notions of getting a more advantageous proposal hereafter. If I considered marriage as absolutely necessary to your happiness, I should regret your losing such an opportunity of establishing yourself; for with a fortune that will be no
more

more than adequate to your support in a very retired situation, small will be your chance of any other offer. But your mind has, I trust, too much of the dignity of independence, to be absolutely at the mercy of extrinsic circumstances for happiness."

While Doctor Orwell was thus conversing with his daughter, her impatient lover who had left the room on Mrs. Botherim's entrance, in hopes of finding his adorable alone in the drawing-room, went immediately thither in search of her. No one was there but Mrs. Fielding; and Carradine, who had at that time little relish for her society, very speedily put an end to his visit.

His impatience to know how Harriet would receive his proposals, was quite insupportable. Still hope predominated; and with spirits highly exhilarated, notwithstanding their agitation, he suddenly darted into Henry's apartment, who was sitting pensive and alone over the dying embers of his fire, the decline of which had entirely escaped his observation.

"What! moping all alone?" cried Carradine, on entering. "Have you had no visit from your sister to-day?"

"No, indeed," returned Henry; "she I believe, is assisting Miss Orwell in making some preparations for this ball, to which they have been invited. You, I suppose, mean to accompany them?"

"Me! oh, without doubt. I would accompany Miss Orwell to the end of the world! Is she not a charming creature? Tell me now, Sydney, did you ever see a more lovely girl? Don't you think a man might fancy himself in paradise with such an angel? Oh! if she be ever mine!"

"Your's!" exclaimed Henry, in a voice which his parched tongue could scarcely render audible.

"Yes, mine!" gaily answered his happy rival.

Perhaps

Perhaps to-day—perhaps in an hour—in less than an hour, I may hear from her sweet lips, that I am the happiest fellow in Christendom ! Zounds, Sydney, you have no notion what a happy fellow I shall be !”

The elder Mr. Sydney then coming in excused Henry from making any reply. Carradine asked him, whether he had been at Mrs. Fielding’s ? To which the old gentleman returned for answer, that he had called there to speak with Doctor Orwell, but found him engaged in his daughter’s apartment ; and as he thought they might be consulting about some family business, he did not interrupt their *tête à tête*.

“ Fine old fellow !” cried Carradine. “ I see he did not lose a moment. But the conference must be over by this time. I fly to know my fate. Good morning.” Grasping Henry’s hand, which he squeezed with great violence, “ Dear Sydney, wish me success !” and then, without making any observation on the altered countenance of Sydney, or imagining him in the least interested in the subject, he precipitately left the room.

No sooner was Sydney alone with his father, than the latter, observing his unusual gravity, and anxious to amuse him in the best manner possible, began to enter into a minute description of a cabinet of natural history, which he had that morning had the pleasure of examining. In vain did he give a detail of all the wonders it contained ; in vain did he describe, with the most minute exactness, the discriminating marks that distinguished the peculiar genus of every butterfly and every beetle. The delight he had received, he did not find it in his power to communicate ; and he saw with regret, that the mind of Henry had not sufficiently recovered its tone to enter
with

with avidity into this favourite subject. So fully was the old gentleman occupied in his description, that it was a considerable time before he observed the distracted and absent air of his son.

At length, having for some moments fixed his eyes on Henry's face, "Henry," said he, in a voice full of paternal tenderness, "what is the matter with thee, my son? I plainly perceive that something has perturbed thy mind. But am I not worthy of thy confidence?"

'You are, you are, sir,' replied Henry, 'most truly worthy of it; but my mind is at present in such a distracted state that I can scarcely make you comprehend my feelings—this fellow—this Carradine has undone me!'

"Carradine! did you say Carradine? And do you then apprehend any further bad consequences from the wound? If so, let me go instantly for the surgeon. Not a moment shall be lost. I——"

'Stop, my dear father,' cried Henry, 'Carradine has indeed inflicted a wound that is incurable; but it is beyond the surgeon's reach. He has torn my heart, and deprived my life of every hope that was dear to it. Oh! look not on me with contempt, accuse me not of folly, when I tell you, that in Harriet Orwell I had treasured up the happiness of my existence!'

"And has Miss Orwell deceived you? Has she scorned your poverty, and forsaken you for a wealthier lover? If so—she is unworthy of my son; she never deserved to share a heart like thine."

Though the feelings of Henry would have made his heart believe that Harriet did him injustice, reason told him she was blameless; and love and honour equally impelled him to exculpate her from the charge. He, therefore, with great eagerness

gerness proceeded to vindicate the conduct of Harriet, and to attribute to his own want of merit, and deficiency in address, the disappointment that now overwhelmed him. To his father he freely opened his whole heart, and found from his soothing and tender sympathy all the consolation of which he was at present susceptible.

From the mutual confidence established in the family of the Sydneys, it was rather surprising that a subject, which had so long engrossed his mind, should not sooner have been communicated. His naturally open and generous temper was formed for confidential intercourse with kindred minds. He was equally a stranger to the coldness of reserve, and the pride of concealment. Whenever he could give pleasure, or even afford amusement by what he communicated, he did it with a frankness at once so natural, and so engaging, that it endeared him to every heart. It was of selfish cares and selfish sorrows that he was alone a churl. These, which are by most young gentlemen deemed the only subject of family confidence, Henry often devoured in secret, or carefully concealed in the recesses of his own bosom. The knowledge of his attachment to Harriet would, he knew, create anxiety in the affectionate hearts of his father and sister, to whom his happiness was too dear to render the completion of his wishes an object of indifference. Now that anxiety was lost in despair, he did not sullenly refuse the consolations of sympathy, but happy in being now able to speak to his best friend without reserve on a subject that occupied his whole soul, he willingly conceded to his proposal of sending an apology to Mrs. Fielding's, that he might have his company for the rest of the evening.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

" Truth weeping tells the mournful tale,
 " How pamper'd Luxury, Flatt'ry by her side,
 " The parasite empoisoning her ear,
 " With all the servile wretches in the rear,
 " Looks o'er proud property extended wide,
 " And eyes the simple rustic mind;
 " Whose toil upholds the glittering show—
 " A creature of *another kind*,
 " Some coarser substance, unrefin'd,
 " *Placed for her lordly use, thus far, thus vile below!*"

BURNS.

FEARFUL of meeting with Carradine, and anxious to avoid an interview that must have been mutually embarrassing, Harriet Orwell proposed accompanying her father on an immediate visit to Miss Botherim; and understanding that Mrs. Botherim intended calling at their late lodgings, she hastened thither in hopes of finding her, while her father wrote a few lines to Carradine, intimating her determined rejection of his suit. Doctor Orwell then stepped into the carriage which waited for him, and taking up his daughter and Mrs. Botherim at Mrs. Benton's, proceeded with them to the city.

No sooner were they seated in the carriage, than the old lady renewed her lamentations concerning Bridgetina's conduct. "See," said she, presenting Mrs. Benton's bill to Doctor Orwell, "see what a sum I have just now paid for her. But this is nothing! Oh, just nothing at all, in comparison to the disgrace of pawning her watch! Oh, think of that, Doctor Orwell! Think of that! The very watch that had cost me so

many tears to coax from my father on my marriage. Not that I should have cared a pin about it, but that the Miss Pickles never let alone telling me of the fine things our neighbour, Miss Dough, the biscuit-maker's daughter, had got upon her wedding. And my poor dear father, who did not like to see me fret, resolved that I should be as fine as the best of 'em! Little did he think that it was ever to come to a pawnbroker's shop!—"

Here the poor lady gave way to a burst of sorrow and indignation, which her companions did all in their power to pacify. After it had somewhat subsided, she thus proceeded: "Nothing could be kinder than our reception from our poor cousin Biggs's; for though they have had a hard struggle with the world, and gone down in fortune, their hearts are as warm and as good as ever. I hoped that Biddy would have taken to them, and that she would ha' been the better of seeing what some folks have to do to get through life; but, alas! they are not book-learned enough for her. And she looks so down upon them that you can't think. But how (says I) should they have found time for study? Cousin Peggy, who is the eldest, was but eighteen years of age when her father died. In half a year after his death their house was burnt to the ground, and in making their escape from a two-pair of stair window, their mother's back was broke, so that she has been bed-ridden ever since; and their brother, then a fine promising lad of fourteen, received a hurt upon his head, which reduced him to the condition you now see. The poor lad is quite an idiot, and the most melancholiest object in this world. Think, Biddy, (says I) think what a charge this was to the poor girls! And do but see how they have fulfilled it. Find-

ing

ing what they had left of the wreck of their father's fortune insufficient for their maintenance, they set up a tea-shop; and as they were well beloved by all the neighbourhood, and every one pitied their misfortunes, they succeeded wonderfully. But what betwixt their attendance on their mother, and on their business, their time to be sure has been too fully occupied to have any leisure for your abstract reasoning, as you call it. They cannot talk about *duties*, I must own, as fine as you do; for how should they, when their whole lives have been employed in performing them?

"Alas, sir, I might as well talk to the stone wall. Biddy just minded me no more than nothing; and when I would make any remark on the kindness with which they treated their poor brother, whom they even seem to love the better for the misfortune that deprived him of the notice of every one besides, or on their attention to their poor miserable parent, who has been so many years a burthen to them, she stops my mouth by asking what all this has to do with *General Utility*? Poor thing! I am sure it was a bad day for her that ever she heard his name; so it was!"

The carriage now drew up at Mrs. Bigg's door; and while Doctor and Miss Orwell waited in the shop, through which lay the only entrance to the apartments, Mrs. Botherin went up to prepare Bridgetina for their reception. The mind of Harriet had been so early and so deeply imbued with a respect for virtue, that she could not divest herself of a degree of reverence in approaching Miss Biggs, such as no external circumstance of rank or splendour could have excited. She willingly accepted of a seat by her,

and entered into conversation with a cheerfulness and unaffected humility, very different from that species of condescension which certain people so kindly assume, when addressing themselves to those whose situation is in any respect inferior to their own. Their conversation was soon interrupted by the entrance of some ladies, who issued from a splendid carriage. Harriet retired to make way for them, while Miss Biggs stood to receive their orders. To her, however, they were in no haste to speak, but continued their conversation to each other, without deigning to observe her.

At length, one of the ladies, seeming to recollect herself, exclaimed, "La! what a shocking place! I vow I cannot breathe in it a moment longer. I beg, young woman, you would make haste."

Miss Biggs modestly requested to know with what article she would be served?

"Did not I tell you it was Indian toys?" returned the lady; then addressing herself to one of her companions, "I declare, these people in the city are so stupid, it is quite a bore!"

The counter was by this time covered with various articles of japan, mother-of-pearl, &c. which the ladies examined and cheapened, making such remarks on the replies given to their questions, as plainly charged the dealer with want of truth and common honesty. At length, after they had sufficiently amused themselves with looking over the things, and were about to depart, the lady first-mentioned happened to lift her veil, and discovered to Doctor Orwell the face of Mrs. General Villers. She either did not see, or pretended not to see, the Doctor; and he, on his part, was by the scene that had just

just occurred, inspired with such a sovereign contempt for the actors, that he felt no wish to recognize any of them as an acquaintance. When they were gone, he asked Miss Biggs if they had really made no purchase.

"No, sir," returned Miss Biggs, "nor had they the least intention to make any. It is what we often meet with."

'But I hope,' rejoined Doctor Orwell, 'you do not often meet with such unprovoked rudeness, such unfeeling insolence?'

"Oh, yes, sir;" said Miss Biggs, smiling, "people of fashion reserve all their good-breeding for their equals; they never consider their inferiors as entitled to the smallest share."

'Then,' said Doctor Orwell, 'people of fashion know not what true good-breeding is. A consideration for the feelings of those with whom we converse, and a quick perception of what those feelings are, is true politeness; and those who have it not, whatever be their rank, are *vulgar*.'

"I am afraid, sir," said Miss Biggs, "that your definition of politeness is not taught at any modern school. At least, if I am to judge from what has fallen under my own observation, I should imagine that a consideration for the feelings of inferiors in any situation is thought not only unnecessary, but absurd."

'I am sorry to hear you say so,' said Harriet, 'as you have such an opportunity for making observations upon character, that I cannot doubt the justice of your remarks.'

"Yes, Madam," replied Miss Biggs, "we have indeed an opportunity of observing an infinite variety in the tempers and dispositions of those who to their equals appear uniformly amiable

able. In the common intercourse of civilised little of the real character appears; but if one would know the world, it is necessary to be dependent."

"Ah!" returned Harriet, "would she gay and she giddy but bear in their recollection, how often they may be looking down upon their superiors in all that is truly estimable, in all that will one day appear so even to themselves, it would check the influence of pride, and lower the arrogance of presumption."

Mrs. Botherin, who had been all this time assisting Bridgetina to dress, now came to lead Doctor and Miss Orwell to the dining-room. Bridgetina received them coldly, and before they had time to enter into any conversation with her, the poor lad, of whose unhappy situation Mrs. Botherin had informed them, ran into the room. Harriet was shocked at his appearance, but would not suffer disgust to enter her bosom at the sight of misfortune incident to humanity. He quickly approached her, and seized the large sun-fan which she held in her hand. Instantly conquering the involuntary flutter which his sudden motion had occasioned, she spoke to him with great gentleness, offering to teach him how to open and shut it. He seemed sensible of her indulgence, and after playing with it for some time, restored it with an appearance of great satisfaction. His youngest sister then came in, and made many apologies for his intrusion. She desired him (not in the tone of authority, but with the voice of affection) to go with her to their mother's apartment, who was then getting her dinner; and at length, by the promise of some sweetmeats which she shewed him, prevailed on him to leave the room.

"How

"How amiable," said Harriet, "how respectable is the conduct of these young women! I shall ever esteem myself obliged to Mrs. Botherim for introducing me to their acquaintance."

'And pray,' cried Bridgerina, 'what is the worth about which you make such a mighty rout? Is not knowledge essential to virtue? And what knowledge have they to boast of?'

"That knowledge," said Dr. Orwell, "without which all other knowledge is an empty boast—the knowledge of their duty. The knowledge which leads not to this one point, is, to the individual who possesses it, futile and nugatory."

'And pray,' retorted Bridgerina, 'how is society benefited by the sort of knowledge you talk of? What is the knowledge good for, that only benefits the individual?'

"Surely," replied Dr. Orwell, "you cannot ask that question seriously! The mere knowledge of our duty is, I grant you, of little consequence, if it does not lead to the practice of it; but when, as in the present instance, it eminently does so, who can say how far the benefit may extend? The active virtue of these young women, their filial piety, their sisterly affection, their kind and humane attention to their unfortunate brother, and the many self-denials they must have undergone in the performance of these duties, added to the conspicuous exertions they have made to enable them to perform them, is such an example of virtue as is not to be contemplated without bowing the heart. Believe me, Miss Botherim, one such example speaks more home to the feelings, and is of greater consequence to society, than volumes of philosophy."

'I trust,' said Harriet, 'the impression it

has made on my heart shall never be obliterated.'

"Nor do I make any doubt," continued Dr. Orwell, "that many have viewed it with feelings of a similar nature. Who knows how often the example of these young women may have silenced the murmurs of discontent? how often it may have produced reflection in the careless, and excited gratitude in the unthinking? We commit a great mistake, when we confine the influence of example to the higher ranks of society. It is an influence of which people in every rank and in every situation are in some degree possessed. Happy they who make such a use of it as the family of whom we are now speaking."

'You, sir,' said Bridgetina, 'have so many prejudices, that it is impossible to argue with you. It may, to be sure, be very well for old Mrs. Biggs and her son, that her daughters were not philosophers; but you will never make me believe, that if they had been taught "to energize according to the flower and summit of their nature," they would not have done more for general utility.'

'And who is this General Utility?' cried Mrs. Botherim, 'whose name is for ever in Biddy's mouth? She is always in a pet when I ask her, as if I should know all about him as well as she; but I am sure she may well know I never feed a General but General Villers, in all my life'

'General Utility, my dear madam,' said Dr. Orwell, smiling, 'is an ideal personage, a sort of Will o' the wisp, whom some people go a great way out of the road to find, but still see him shining in some distant and unbeaten track; while, if they would keep at home, and look for him
in

in the plain path of christian duty, they would never miss their aim.'

The entrance of Lady Aldgate and her daughter put an end to the conversation, and gave to Doctor and Miss Orwell an opportunity, of which they willingly availed themselves, of taking leave.

CHAP. XVIII.

"Let reason teach what passion fain would hide,
 "That Hymen's bands by prudence should be tied;
 "Venus in vain the wedded pair would crown,
 "If angry fortune on their union frown."

LYTTLETON.

GREATLY had the sanguine spirit of Carradine been mortified, by the unfavourable report that had been made to him of the sentiments of his mistress. That report had, however, been given by her father in terms so obliging, as though it greatly damped, did not entirely extinguish every hope. Perhaps her heart might be melted by a love-letter. He had heard of such things, and resolved to try the experiment. Writing, it is true, was not poor Carradine's fort; but tasks more difficult would at this time have appeared trifling to his ardent mind. After spending the whole of the evening and great part of the night in writing and re-writing the important scroll, he at length produced an epistle, which, if not a first-rate piece of oratory, contained at least as much good-sense as any love-letter we have ever had the pleasure of perusing.

It was received by Harriet at such an early hour as gave her sufficient time to answer it before breakfast. By being delivered in presence of her friend, it laid her under the necessity of breaking the silence she had hitherto observed to Maria on the subject of Carradine's addresses. Superior to that mean vanity which leads little minds to exult in exposing to the view of others the mortification of a rejected lover, she considered every principle of delicacy and honour as engaged in keeping his secret. To have made the affections of any human being the object of her ridicule, she would have deemed in the last degree cruel and unjustifiable. The behaviour of many of her companions had, in this particular, appeared odious in her eyes; and so far was she from following their example, that till the introduction of Carradine's letter, (when any longer concealment would have worn the appearance of mystery) she had not even given her bosom-friend a hint upon the subject.

In her answer to Carradine, she united firmness to delicacy, and candour to politeness. She did not consider the circumstance of her being singled out from among her sex, as the person with whom he would wish to spend his days, as giving her any right to treat him with scorn or indignity; but at the same time had too much regard for her own honour and his repose, to give him a hope which she did not mean to realize.

Poor Carradine had no sooner dispatched his letter, than he repented him of his rashness. It then occurred to him, that through the medium of Mrs. Fielding he might more effectually have pleaded his cause; and the instant the idea was started he resolved to pursue it, hoping that the
interest

interest of Mrs. Fielding might still be so far exerted in his favour, as to prevent Miss Orwell from extinguishing his hopes by a positive refusal. He flew to Hanover-square on the instant, or rather would have flown if wings could have been procured, but for these a hackney-coach is, alas! a sorry substitute. In vain did he swear at the coachman, in vain did he anathematize the horses; neither coachman nor horses could be prevailed on to keep pace with his impatient spirit. At length arrived, he sprung to the door, and told the servant who opened it, that he must see Mrs. Fielding on a business of importance immediately.

"My mistress is not yet up," replied the footman; "but if you will step into the breakfast-parlour, I dare say she will be down in less than an hour."

"An hour!" 'sdeath, an age! For heaven's sake, at least desire her maid to inform her that I am here, and greatly wish to see her."

The man obeyed, and in less than half an hour Mrs. Fielding was with him. He abruptly informed her of the purport of his visit, and vehemently besought her interest in his favour; intreating her to go immediately to Miss Orwell, to urge her to grant him the favour of an interview.

While he yet spoke, he heard the voice of Harriet on the stairs, and involuntarily opening the door, he saw the answer to his letter in the hands of the servant, to whom Miss Orwell had just delivered it. He impatiently snatched it from him, and casting his eye over the contents, gave way to an agony of despair.

Mrs. Fielding, having perused the letter, told him, that after such a candid declaration of her sentiments,

sentiments, it would be offering an insult to the delicacy of Miss Orwell to persevere in his suit. The woman (she observed) who after such a positive rejection could be flattered into a change of mind, must be the imbecile child of vanity. Such, she was certain, was not Harriet Orwell. She therefore advised him to bear with manly firmness an evil that could not be remedied, and to endeavour by absence to wear off the impression.

Carradine listened to her for a short time in silence; and then coldly thanking her for her advice, abruptly took his leave. There was a certain fermenting principle in his mind, which, laying hold of whatever happened to be the present object of interest, worked it up to such a state of effervescence, as rendered it absolutely necessary for him to have a confidant to receive the overflowings of his heart.

Finding solitude intolerable, he bent his way to Henry Sydney, in order to vent to him those feelings of chagrin and disappointment which he no longer had patience to confine to his own breast. Henry was alone, and not (as many of our fair readers doubtless will expect) confined to his bed by a relapse of fever, or raving in a beautiful delirium of despair; but pensively sitting by the fire-side with a book in his hand. We are sensible that a dangerous fit of illness would in his circumstances have been vastly more becoming, and much more natural, in the hero of a novel. We do not presume to say, that youth and a good constitution ought to be admitted as any apology for his persevering in convalescence at such a time, but simply own the fact. That he may not, however, entirely lose the interest we hope he has obtained in the hearts

hearts of our fair readers, we must not omit adding that he looked as melancholy as possible. Soon, however, was his melancholy dissipated by Carradine; who, after a few incoherent sentences, and as many exclamations, of which Henry could not guess the meaning, put into his hands the letter of Harriet, which had been to him as the sentence of never-ending misery.

Henry perused it with an emotion even superior to his own. "Charming, charming Harriet!" cried he, after having with his eye devoured the contents; "How disinterested! how noble! how generous!"

'Generous!' cried Carradine; 'one would think you were glad she had refused me!'

"Forgive me, Carradine!" said Henry, offering him his hand; "but you are yourself so generous and so open, that I should hate myself if I deceived you. I love Harriet Orwell. I have long loved her. Even from infancy our hearts have been united in the bonds of the tenderest friendship. Want of fortune has alone prevented me from urging her to unite her fate with mine. Judge, then, if I can say I am sorry at a circumstance which revives my hopes, and raises me from the very brink of despair."

Carradine started back, and regarded him for a moment with a look of phrensy. Then hastily turning from him, he strided four or five times up and down the room, and at length retiring to the further window, stood for some minutes silent. Henry reproached himself for having inflicted an additional wound in the breast of his rival. He was afraid to speak, lest whatever he should say might wear the appearance of triumphing in his disappointment. The silence was at length broken by Carradine, who coming
up

up to Henry, and taking the hand he had before rejected, 'Sydney,' said he, 'you are a happy fellow! but don't think me the wretch to repine at your felicity. No. If I had known you had a prior claim to her affections, curse me if I would have interfered with it. I would perish sooner than do any thing so base!'

Henry spoke the effusions of his heart, in giving him the praise his generosity so truly merited; and assured him, that though her refusal of an offer so advantageous, from a character so unexceptionable, gave him some cause for hope, he was far from being certain of success. So well in the conversation that ensued did Henry manage the ardent temper of Carradine, that he left him in a great measure reconciled to a disappointment, which, but an hour before, he had considered in the light of an event which was to tinge the colour of his future days with misery.

The recovery of Henry was now so rapid, that on the very following day he surprised his friends by an unexpected visit. Though dinner had been some time over, the ladies had not yet retired to the drawing-room, when Henry made his appearance. Mrs. Fielding received him with joy, and welcomed his return with an embrace that spoke the feelings of maternal affection.

"Thank Heaven! that my brother, my dear brother is again restored to us!" exclaimed Maria, affectionately retaining one hand, while Dr. Orwell and Mr. Churchill alternately took the other. Harriet alone did not advance to meet him in the general joy; her voice only was unheard, but the congratulations which her faltering tongue could not pronounce, beamed from her eyes in a look of ineffable delight, while pleasure and surprise suffused her glowing cheek with

with crimson. When he came up to where she stood, she held out her hand with a complacency which seemed to assure Henry that his presence did not displease her; and though the few words she stammered out were perfectly unintelligible to every one besides, it would appear that he sufficiently understood their meaning.

The remainder of the evening was exclusively devoted to friendship; Mrs. Fielding giving orders that no visitor should be admitted to intrude upon the social circle. And though neither cards nor scandal were introduced, we do not find that time appeared particularly tedious to any of the party.

While Henry was again enjoying a happiness, rendered doubly dear to him from the sufferings he had lately endured, his father, full of anxious solicitude for his felicity, was making every effort to render it complete. He took the earliest opportunity of informing Doctor Orwell of his son's attachment to his daughter, and found the Doctor more pleased than surprised at the information. He had in truth long ago observed the growing passion, and as it was the happiness, not the affluence, of his child, that was the object of his wishes, nothing was more desirable in his eyes than to behold her united to a man of Henry's sense and virtue.

Since the time that these old gentlemen had entered into the married state, they had lived so secluded from the world, that the rapid progress of luxury had almost escaped their observation. In an humble mediocrity of fortune, they had themselves found happiness; and it did not readily enter into their imaginations to conceive, why beginning the world with a splendid establishment was more necessary to their children

children than it had been to themselves. To the mind of Mr. Sydney a monopoly of wealth and power appeared an evil of mighty magnitude ; and far from wishing his children to become accessaries, in continuing a system to which, in his opinion, might be fairly attributed the greater part of the miseries that have scourged the human race, he had laboured to impress their minds with a sense of its turpitude and injustice. Political science had long been his favourite study ; and though a perfect equality of conditions he considered to be impracticable and absurd, the advantages that would result to society from such a dissemination of the wealth of a country as should render the extremes of wealth and poverty unknown, appeared to him so obvious, that he wondered how it could escape the observation of an enlightened mind. He had himself written a tract upon the subject, which he addressed to the great landed proprietors of Great-Britain ; clearly demonstrating it to be their bounden duty, by making an equal division of their property among their children, to begin that gradual and rational reform, which would ultimately be productive of an increase of public happiness and virtue.

Doctor Orwell, though less inclined to abstract speculation than his friend, perfectly coincided with him in principle. With respect to the happiness of their children, their sentiments were in unison ; and to promote their union they readily agreed to give up, on both sides, such a part of their present income as they deemed sufficient to establish the people in some degree of comfort.

The result of their consultations was immediately communicated to Henry by his father, who informed him, that he was now at full liberty

berty to disclose his sentiments to Harriet, since the consent of her father had given a sanction to his wishes.

With some confusion Henry was obliged to confess, that he had anticipated the permission so graciously bestowed. Harriet was already mistress of every secret of his heart: Attracted by the sound of the harpsichord to Mrs. Fielding's music-room, he had there found Harriet alone; the opportunity was irresistible. The apprehension of her father's displeasure, the threatened loss of Mrs. Fielding's friendship, the imprudence of marrying without a fortune, all were at that moment forgotten; and the dread of suffering from the horrid idea of another and perhaps more fortunate rival, appeared to him a consideration paramount to every other. His father listened to his apology with a smile, that told him he had no great difficulty in pronouncing his pardon. He moreover promised to speak to Mrs. Fielding on the subject, and hoped to be able to avert her displeasure at such a very direct breach of her injunctions.

Mr. Sydney was as good as his word; he told her of the plan agreed to by Dr. Orwell and himself for the union of their families, and begged to have her opinion concerning it.

"I must speak to Miss Orwell on the subject before I can reply to your question," said Mrs. Fielding; and stepping to the next room, where she knew Harriet was then employed in writing to her sister, "I come, my dear," said she, "to speak to you on matters of such importance to your happiness, that I shall not apologize for interrupting you." Harriet, anticipating the subject on which she intended to interrogate her, bowed in some confusion. Mrs. Fielding proceeded

ceeded—"I am afraid you will set me down for an intermeddling old woman; but I do assure you, it is not from the desire of gratifying an old maidish curiosity that I am prompted to ask you some questions, which I hope you will have the good-nature to forgive, and the ingenuities to answer."

Harriet again bowed assent.

"The reasons you gave me for refusing this address of Mr. Carradine were all calculated to do you honour. They were such as I could not but approve; but, tell me, my dear, was there no other little lurking motive?—Ah! that blush is a sufficient reply, and I shall require no other. Had Henry Sydney a fortune equal to Carradine's, I should not be surprised at your preferring him; but my dear Miss Oswald, do you consider what you are about to do? Have you duly weighed the consequences?"

"I hope I have, Madam; but if you see any objections—if you—pray go on, I shall be much obliged to you for your opinion and advice."

Mrs. Fielding resumed:—"Though we are all the poor dependents on futurity, and though it be our sanguine hope of future felicity that makes up the greater part of our present enjoyment, yet we do almost always err by making the estimation of that felicity from present feeling. While inspired by youthful passion, we think that love alone will constitute the happiness of our future days; the evils of poverty are then despised, and when viewed at a distance are perhaps converted by fancy into a charming addition to romantic tenderness. If imagination have thus deceived you, let me beg of you, before it is too late, to dismiss the vain illusion, and take a real view of the cares and vexations that may await you."

"I am.

‘ I am fully sensible of the truth of all you have said,’ returned Harriet, ‘ as well as of your goodness in reminding me of it. The subject is not new to my reflections ; if I had been brought up in the lap of luxury and sloth, or accustomed to place my happiness in the gratification of vanity, I am aware of the misery that would await a change of circumstances. But all my habits have been those of active industry, and all my hopes of happiness have been taught to rest in the bosom of domestic peace. For myself I have therefore nothing to fear ; but for Henry—’

“ You are a charming girl!” cried Mrs. Fielding, tenderly embracing her, “ and truly deserving of the happiness that I hope awaits you. But here comes Henry, and I must now talk a little with him ; so pray step into the next room for a few minutes. Well, sir,” continued Mrs. Fielding, addressing herself to Henry as Harriet retired, “ I see the friendship of an old woman is not so valuable in your eyes as the affections of a young one. Nay, nay, don’t offer any apology, you must hear me out. I told you, I never should consent to your marrying without a fortune adequate to your support ; and I shall keep my word. Here,” continued she, taking a bundle of papers from her pocket, and presenting them to Henry, “ on perusing these you will perceive, that I then addressed myself to a man who was his own master. Forgive me for having prolonged the term of your probation, but I too well knew the danger of habits of luxury and dissipation, not to wish to save the child I had adopted from their dominion. It was on this account I directed you to the choice of a profession which, while it afforded an immediate object to your mind, and prevented the
the

the rust of idleness from corroding your faculties, put it in your power to be useful to your fellow-creatures. The man without employment is a cypher in society; dependent upon others for an adventitious value, he is in himself contemptible. May you, my son, (for as such I shall ever consider you) so employ your fortune and your talents, as to make them instrumental to your eternal happiness. And in the dear girl you have chosen for a wife, may you receive as great a reward as this world can bestow. So God bless you!"

Henry seized the hand that she held out to him, and involuntarily dropping on his knees, pressed it to his lips. His emotion was too great for utterance; and Mrs. Fielding, wishing to escape the effusions of his gratitude, immediately left the room.

It was some time before Henry could sufficiently compose himself to proceed to the examination of the papers she had left with him; when he did, he found a deed of gift for ten thousand pounds, made on the day he had attained his fifth year. The sum had been at that period lodged in the hands of trustees, who received the interest, which they laid out in the funds, and regularly accounted for the stock thus accumulated. The principal was now, even after deducting the two hundred a year allowed for his education, nearly doubled; so that he saw himself in possession of one thousand pounds a year, independent of his profession.

Harriet, who had in the adjoining apartment watched the departure of Mrs. Fielding, and expected Henry would instantly join her, was not a little disappointed at his delay. She began to persuade herself that the arguments urged by
prudence

prudence had prevailed upon his mind, and that he, perhaps, at that moment was struck with repentance for the rashness of his declaration. A small spark of latent pride began to operate upon her mind. She would no longer be the cause of his uneasiness; she would free him from the fetters of an engagement, of which it was plain he already began to feel the weight. Impressed with this idea, she gently opened the door that separated the two apartments, the first view she took of Henry confirmed her suspicions; but the first sentence he uttered banished them from her heart for ever!

CHAP. XIX.

“Will you not now the pair of sages praise,
 “Who the same end pursued by different ways?
 “One pity’d, one condemn’d, the woeful times;
 “One laughed at follies, one lamented crimes.”

DRYDEN’S TRANS. OF JUV. SAT. X. 28.

AS lovers are of all people in the world those whose company we have found most insupportably insipid, we shall not tire our readers by confining them to it for too great a length of time, but briefly inform them, that Mr. Churchill having found in the charms of Maria a consolation for his late disappointment, obtained her father’s consent to lead her to the altar at the same time that Henry and his bride were to exchange their vows. While the preparations were going on for the double nuptials, Doctor Orwell found it necessary to return to W——, but

but proposed coming up with his youngest daughter before the ceremony took place. Mr. Sydney, having procured a young clergyman to officiate in his absence, readily consented to remain in London till he could be accompanied to the country by his children. While fixing on houses for their future residence, giving directions about repairs, purchasing furniture, plate, &c. &c. occupied the mornings of the young people, Mr. Sydney employed his at the Museums of Natural History, which particularly attracted his attention. In these he found a never-failing source of amusement, and was only mortified on perceiving the little interest the young people seemed to take in his elaborate descriptions. Even Maria, who in the country had listened to the subject with so much complacency, had apparently lost much of her relish for plants and butterflies, since her residence in London. Hoping, however, that her taste was not as yet quite lost, he one day brought her home a small chrysalis of uncommon beauty, with which a friend had presented him; while she complacently expressed her admiration Churchill entered the room, and perceiving how she was engaged, peeped over her shoulder at the object of her contemplation.

"Is it not very beautiful?" said she, looking up to him with an enchanting smile.

'It is, indeed,' replied he, dashing with his finger and thumb the little chrysalis into the fire, but still keeping his eyes fixed upon the paper.

"Bless me!" exclaimed Maria, "what have you done? Where is the chrysalis? Why did you throw it away?"

'Indeed, sir,' said Mr. Sydney, gravely, 'I shall take care how I permit such a treasure to come into your way again.'

"What

"What have I done?" cried Churchill, in amazement; "of what treasure do you speak? I have not surely injured the poem Maria was looking at, which, if not a first-rate performance, is certainly not destitute of merit, if there be merit in truth."

Maria, though vexed at the mortification it occasioned to her father, could scarcely forbear laughing at her lover's mistake. The chrysalis was happily not irrecoverably lost. After having carefully picked it from the ~~ashes~~, and restored it to him who best knew its value, ~~she~~ examined the lines that had attracted the attention of Mr. Churchill, and at his request read them aloud.

TO SELFISHNESS.

NO, Selfishness, thou art not Nature's child!
Of proud and pamper'd Lux'ry thou wert born!
Not in the rural vale, or desert wild,
But 'mid those polish'd scenes where Plenty pours her horn.

Behold that youth, in whose soul-beaming eye
Sits Sympathy, and each affection kind;
His bosom swells with Pity's tender sigh,
And at another's bliss warm glows his gen'rous mind.

No cold distrust hath ever chill'd his heart,
No blank reserve his truth-taught lips hath seal'd;
Ardent he seeks his feelings to impart,
And to the friend he loves his inmost soul's reveal'd.

Is there who cheer'd him in the hour of woe,
Who from his eyes has wip'd Affliction's tear?
Pure Gratitude's full stream doth ceaseless flow,
Enhancing, as it runs, each obligation dear.

Doth rude Necessity's imperious law
In tedious business half his hours employ?

From

From sleep, from pastime, still he time can draw,
To aid the precious fund of dear domestic joy.

His soul a sister's fond affection charms,
He joys to meet maternal love's mild beam ;
The bliss of blessing all his bosom warms,
And dear doth his pure heart the social circle deem.

Such is the youth in Nature's bosom bred,
While yet a stranger to the polish'd world ;
Behold him now in Fashion's gay walks tread,
And in the vortex vile of Dissipation whirl'd.

As Knareborough's rills* arrest the silken zone,
And drop by drop insidious works its change,
Till the gay flutt'rer, stiff'ning into stone,
In form alone escapes the transformation strange :

So love of Pleasure by degrees devours
Each nobler, finer feeling of the heart ;
So Pride and Vanity's transforming pow'rs
Doth callous Selfishness e'en to its core impart.

See him, who erst with Sympathy's warm zeal
Explor'd the rhet'rick of the asking eye ;
Who with the poor would share his scanty meal,
And at soft Pity's call could his own wants deny ;

Now press'd by wants that Nature never knew,
(Fantastic wants ! imperious as vain)

He for himself finds Fortune's gifts too few,
Nor at soft Pity's call will one wild wish restrain.

He, whose warm heart with sympathetic glow
Shar'd all the bosom-feelings of a friend,
Now in gay crouds, or at the public shew,
In heartless, joyless pomp prefers his hours to spend.

No more the social fire-side circle charms,
No more a mother's smiles he joys to meet ;
Fraternal love no more his bosom warms,
Nor thoughts of giving joy imparts one rapture sweet.

* Alluding to the petrefaction of ribbons so quickly effected
by the Dropping-Well of Knareborough.

No,

No, Selfishness, thou art not Nature's child ;
 Of proud and pamper'd Lux'ry thou wer't born ;
 Not in the rural vale, or desert wild,
 But in those polish'd scenes where Plenty pours her horn.

Though the name of Carradine was never mentioned at Mrs. Fielding's, he was not forgotten by any of the party. The generous heart of Henry felt for the mortification of his rival, and finding that he did not come again to him, he took the earliest opportunity of calling at his lodgings. He there learned that Carradine had set off for Bath the day after he had last seen him, and from thence he soon after received from him the following letter :

" My dear Sydney,

" IMMEDIATELY on leaving you, I met with a party of friends who, like myself, were on the wing for India ; but as the fleet will not be ready to sail for a few weeks, they resolved to take a dash to Bath in the interim. I liked the thought, and was glad to accompany them ; and here we are beating about like so many spaniels in a rabbit-warren. No cessation from amusement. Morning, noon, and night, all here are on the scent of pleasure ; but for what is called *pleasure* I find I have lost somewhat of my relish, for I now find living in a croud to be abominably insipid. Poor Doctor Orwell was shocked at the idea of girls of character going to the Indian market ; but had he come to Bath, he might have beheld a perpetual fair, where every ball-room may be considered as a booth for the display of beauty to be disposed of to the highest matrimonial bidder. Having been introduced to some very pleasant fellows, all of them men of large fortune and high

high connexions, I have through them had an opportunity of making what acquaintance I chose. The mothers have all smiled upon me, and I have had no reason to complain of my reception from the daughters. I have admired the beauty of several, and do not know, had it been less pressed upon my observation, what effect it might have had upon my heart. But what one sees morning, noon, and night, soon ceases to interest; and in a society where intimacy takes place without acquaintance, the mind can never rivet the chain which is forged by the senses.

“ Harriet Orwell would not, I think, like Bath. No; she likes *conversation*, and here is only *talk*. But were Harriet Orwell here, she would, I make no doubt, soon discover some congenial souls, who form a more rational society than that which has come within the sphere of my observation. But why do I mention Harriet Orwell? Why, to shew you that I can do it without pain; and to convince you that my heart has been made the better, and not the worse, for its admiration of excellence.

“ From the tenor of my letter, you will perceive that this trip has been of use to my spirits, and if you are the generous fellow I take you for, you will entirely restore them. To do this, you must permit me to contribute to your happiness. I am at present looking out for some person in whose hands I can deposit two thousand pounds. It is the remainder of the sum I brought with me from India. I am perfectly careless about the interest, nor would the loss of the principal affect me; so that it is no compliment to say that the use of it is very much at your service. I hate the lawyers, and am an enemy to the stamp-act; I shall therefore have
nothing

nothing to say to bonds or parchments, but leave you to manage the sum I have mentioned entirely as you please, till my return to Europe ; and am, &c. &c.

BASIL CARRADINE.

The reader's heart, if he have one, will be at no loss to suggest the reply which Henry made to the friendly offer of his truly generous rival. Another letter of the same date, received from Dr. Orwell, assigned to him a task of a more unpleasant nature. Tidings of Mr. Glib's having been arrested and thrown into prison had reached W—— ; and the good Doctor, who never remembered the faults of the unfortunate, intreated his friends to interest themselves in his behalf, and if possible, to extricate him from the horrors of confinement.

Following the directions they had received, Mr. Sydney and his son proceeded to Newgate ; where, in a gloomy and desolate apartment, they found the unhappy Glib, a prey to the most abject dejection. The flippancy of his manner was now exchanged for an air of despondency, which, however, a little brightened up on being informed of the purport of their visit. In order to know how far there was a possibility of serving him, it was necessary to have an accurate account of the state of his affairs ; in giving which he was obliged to confess himself the dupe of Vallaton, against whom he now poured forth all the bitterness of invective.

Mr. Sydney was at much pains to turn the current of his wrath from the man to the principles on which he had acted ; these the old gentleman was at great pains to pourtray in their proper colours. What he learned from Glib

of the conduct of Vallaton, impressed him with a deep sorrow for the fate of poor Julia, and gave him a fresh anxiety concerning her situation; and finding that Glib, though he could not himself furnish any information concerning them, suspected Mr. Myope of being acquainted with the place of their concealment, he resolved immediately to apply to that gentleman on the subject.

While Henry remained to take in writing the statement which Glib had given of his affairs, his father proceeded to Myope's lodgings, and had the good fortune of finding him at home, and alone. He introduced himself without difficulty, but found the philosopher very little inclined to gratify him on the subject of his enquiries. After receiving some evasive answers to his plain questions, Mr. Sydney with some indignation said, "After the accounts I have just received from a person whom the perfidious villainy of this man has involved in ruin, I cannot wonder that he should skulk in concealment; but from you, sir, I should expect better than to protect a man who, as far as I can learn, has acted like a scoundrel in every thing."

"Scoundrels, sir," said Mr. Myope, "are frequently, indeed almost always, men of talents, and great talents are great energies; and great energies cannot but flow from a powerful sense of fitness and justice. You allude, I suppose, to Mr. Vallaton's conduct as treasurer to the Hottentonian committee, from which conduct Mr. Glib has been a sufferer. But, sir, Mr. Vallaton no doubt perceived a degree of fitness in appropriating those sums to himself, which a man of more confined intellect might not have discovered."

‘ Is

"Is it possible, sir," cried Mr. Sydney, "that a man of your seeming gravity can be the apologist of such crimes?"

"There is no such thing as crime," replied Myope; "and though Mr. Vallaton may, perhaps, in some instances have acted erroneously, yet it is incontestably proved, that as a man of talents he cannot be destitute of virtue."

"The Devil himself is represented as possessed of talents," returned Mr. Sydney, "and of him the doctrines you have mentioned are truly worthy."

"The Devil!" rejoined Mr. Myope; "why, my dear sir, the Devil is the first of heroes! I cannot conceive a greater compliment than to be compared to the Devil. You do not know in what high estimation his character is held by modern philosophers. It is possible that his energies, like those of Mr. Vallaton, centered too much in personal regards; but take him all in all, his is the first of imaginary characters that it ever entered into the heart of man to conceive. Oh, the virtues of the Devil are inestimable!"

"Mr. Vallaton has indeed proved a very close imitator of the arch apostate," said Mr. Sydney; "and I am afraid Miss Delmond, like our general mother, will find that she has listened to the voice of this black seducer to be

"Despoil'd of innocence, of faith, of bliss!"

Can you, sir, inform me (for, from the infamous character of the man, I have my doubts) whether he and Miss Delmond are really married?"

"I cannot speak to a certainty," replied Myope; "but all I can say is, that I do not think Mr. Val-

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lton

lation a man likely to sanction by his example an institution so immoral and injurious to the interests of society."

Mr. Sydney looked aghast. "Is it possible," cried he, "that vice should thus audaciously assume the name of virtue?"

'And pray, sir,' returned Myope, 'what is virtue, but another name for happiness? Is not happiness the only true end of existence?'

"That happiness is the only true end of existence, I grant you," said Mr. Sydney; "and if you can point out a single instance where an encrease of happiness has been the result of this new system of morals, I shall allow your argument to have some weight."

'The new morality is too sublime for the present depraved and distempered state of human society,' rejoined Mr. Myope. 'The experiments that have been made in it have been rather premature, and therefore cannot expect to have been followed with advantageous consequences to the individuals, who have nobly stemmed the torrent of prejudice to make them.'

"A proof to me," replied Mr. Sydney, "of the superiority of those principles which are adapted to every state of society, and to every circumstance in which a human being can be placed; which, by governing the passions and regulating the affections of the heart, bring peace to the soul, and are equally calculated for enhancing the enjoyment of prosperity by preserving from its temptations, and of allaying the bitterness of adversity by saving from despair."

"A contemptuous smile, which overspread the countenance of Mr. Myope as Mr. Sydney pronounced the last sentence, indicated a sneering reply; but a letter, which was at that moment

ment put into his hands by his servant, gave a new expression to every feature, and for the supercilious smile of scorn, substituted the frown of fury and revenge. 'Vallaton is indeed a villain!' exclaimed he, stamping his foot in a paroxysm of rage. 'Infidious serpent! *He* seduce my Emmeline! *He* entice her to leave me in this manner! Ungrateful wretch! To act thus by *me*! It is intolerable!' In this incoherent manner did he run on for some time, before Mr. Sydney could at all comprehend the cause of his inquietude. At length, however, he discovered that Mr. Vallaton had that morning set off for France with *the Goddess of Reason*, of whom it now appeared he had long been the favoured lover.

It may perhaps be expected, that Mr. Sydney should with avidity avail himself of so favourable an opportunity of triumphing in the discomfiture of an opponent; so far, however, was Mr. Sydney from doing so, that the expressions which would so naturally have slid to the tongue of many good people in similar circumstances, never once found their way to his. Observing the mind of Mr. Myope too much agitated for a discussion on principles, he only staid with him until he obtained an address to the lodgings Vallaton had lately occupied; and thither the old gentleman instantly hurried, in hopes of gaining some information concerning the injured and now forsaken Julia. His solicitude was fruitless. Vallaton and Julia had left these lodgings a fortnight, nor could the people of the house furnish him with any clue to their next place of abode. Oppressed by fatigue, and overwhelmed with regret, he returned to Mrs. Fielding's, where happiness beamed on every countenance,

and the sweet flutterings of youthful hope, or the more delicious feelings of internal satisfaction, dwelt in every heart. In the contemplation of such a scene every selfish sorrow would have been annihilated. The heart of Mr. Sydney swelled with gratitude to the Giver of all good, for making him a witness of the happiness of his children, but had been too deeply wounded in the course of the morning to admit of an immediate return of its wonted serenity.

CHAP. XX.

- "Then gently scan your brother man,
 "Still gentler, sister woman;
 "Though they may gang a kennin wrang,
 "To step aside is human.
 "Who made the heart, 'tis he alone
 "Decidedly can try us;
 "He knows each chord, its various tone,
 "Each spring, its various bias:
 "Then at the balance let's be mute,
 "*We never can adjust it;*
 "What's done we partly may compute,
 "*But never what's resisted.*"

BURNS.

BY the zeal of Mr. Sydney, the liberality of Mrs. Fielding, and the active exertions of Henry, the affairs of Mr. Glib were put into such a train, that in the course of a few days he was set at liberty. Putting himself under the direction of his benefactors, and abjuring all connection with his former associates, he set out for W—to re-enter upon the possession of his house

house and shop, to re-assemble his children round his own fire-side, and to receive back his repentant wife, who now forsaken by her gallant, was left a prey to the miseries of poverty, or the still greater miseries of vice. Having been mutually to blame, Mr. Sydney strongly recommended to them the duty of mutual forgiveness; and such weight had his advice, from the nets of beneficence with which it was prefaced, that they did not scruple to adopt it. New ideas of duty, and new perceptions of happiness, began to open on their minds; attention to business occupied the hours that had formerly been devoted to the study of new theories in philosophy; and instead of descanting on general utility, they now seriously applied themselves to the education of their own children.

Glib, being now convinced that there is no immorality in gratitude, scruples not to declare, that he owes to his benefactors not only the re-establishment of his credit, but the existence of his happiness. Nor let the proud reader murmur at our thus transgressing the order of our history, to give this concluding sketch of the adventures of a simple tradesman. It is the affected prerogative of selfish prosperity to consider as mere automaton all who move not in its own exalted sphere; but it is the privilege of philosophy to view human nature from a still more lofty eminence, from which the paltry distinctions of situation are lost to the eye, and the interests of humanity assert an equal claim to the feelings of the heart.

To return to our narrative. The preparations for the nuptials were now completed; the day fixed on for their celebration was at hand. It was expected by the parties with that chastened

hope, which in well-regulated minds attends the often-clouded prospect of earthly felicity. They felt the fulness of satisfaction, but were taught by reason to set bounds to the wild extravagance of joy.

The friendship of the two young ladies, which had been knit by a sympathy of taste and sentiment, was strengthened by a similarity of situation; nor would the happiness of either have been compleat, if it had not been shared by the other.

"Surely," said Harriet, one day that she was sitting alone with her friend, "surely, Maria, we are highly favoured of Heaven; if our gratitude were proportioned to its gifts, I believe we should do nothing but pray and sing psalms from morning to night. Well, I wish to God that all the world were as happy as we are!"

'And that wish, my dear girl,' said Mrs. Fielding, who then entered the room, 'is of itself a song of thanksgiving more acceptable than a thousand psalms. But where is Henry? I have got some business for him, and expected to find him here.'

"He will be here soon, I will answer for him," said Maria, "and here he is."

'Here, however,' said Mrs. Fielding, 'I cannot at present permit him to remain.'

She then put into his hands a billet she had just received from the matron of her asylum, informing her of the admission of an unfortunate young woman, who was so very ill as to require immediate medical attendance. Her appearance, she added, was extremely interesting, and plainly indicated something very superior to her present situation.

'Come,' said Mrs. Fielding, when Henry had

had read the note, 'let us hasten to this poor unfortunate. The carriage is already at the door; and not to mortify you too much by taking you away, the girls shall accompany us. What say you, ladies, to my proposal?'

Their assent was readily accorded, and the coachman, obeying the orders of his mistress, drove full speed to the asylum. On alighting, the young ladies went into the work-room, where they were already known and beloved; while Mrs. Fielding and Henry followed the matron to the chamber of the young stranger. There, reclining on the bed in a state of almost torpid insensibility, they beheld a young person, whose face was concealed from view by a mass of pale brown hair, which uncombed and unarranged flowed over it in wild disorder. The inimitable beauty of her hand and arm attracted their instant observation; Henry gazed for a moment in silence, and then suddenly advancing, "Is it possible!" cried he, in a smothered tone. "Is it Miss Delmond, Julia Delmond, that I see thus?"

At the sound of that name she hastily raised her head; and with a wild and sudden motion putting back her hair, frantically gazed on Henry for a moment, then uttering a loud scream, fainted away.

When she recovered, she found herself supported in the arms of Mrs. Fielding, and her face bathed with the tears which fell fast from that good lady's eyes. 'Where am I?' cried she, in a quick and hurried voice. 'And who are you? And why do you weep? Did you know my father? But be comforted; you did not kill him; you did not break his heart. Ah! no, no,

no, no!" then striking her hand against her forehead, she hid her face in Mrs. Fielding's bosom.

"Do not afflict yourself thus, my dear child," said Mrs. Fielding; "you are ill, and must take care of yourself, and here is your old friend and physician, Doctor Sydney, who begs leave to attend you, and I dare say will join with me in entreating you to dismiss every uneasy thought from your mind. You are not among strangers, but surrounded by your best and most affectionate friends."

'Yes,' said Doctor Sydney, affectionately taking her hand, 'yes, dear Miss Delmond, you do not know how much pleasure your recovery will give to many hearts.'

A deep sigh burst from her bosom, but as if afraid to look on Henry, she clung to Mrs. Fielding to conceal her face from his observation.

"Perhaps," said Mrs. Fielding, "Miss Delmond would better like to see her friend Harriet Orwell."

'Harriet Orwell!' repeated Miss Delmond; 'ah! no, no, Harriet Orwell would now disdain to look on the poor forlorn Julia!'

"My Julia! my dear Julia! my sweet friend!" cried Harriet, who had only waited for a signal to approach her, and clasping her in her arms, imprinted an affectionate kiss on her pale cheek; "Never, never will your friend Harriet forsake you!" Sighs and tears choaked her utterance; while Julia, with all the strength she had left, strained her to her bosom. She attempted to speak, but voice was denied her; the words died away upon her parched and pallid lips, and again she was near fainting, when a timely shower of tears seemed in some measure to relieve her swollen heart.

It

It was the relief of nature, and her friends were too judicious to seek to stop the salutary effusion. Harriet, indeed, shed tear for tear; and Maria, who stood at a distance, apprehensive of overpowering the poor timid mourner, by the appearance of so many people at once, had her full share of the affecting scene.

At length Mrs. Fielding observed, that they must not too far indulge their feelings. That ill as Miss Delmond evidently was, she thought she might now be removed to her house without danger. "And when there," said she, "I hope, under the care of so many kind nurses, she will soon be well. Come, my love," she added, kindly pressing Julia's hand, "do not too much give way to this emotion, but let me prevail upon you to rally your exhausted spirits, and to take some refreshment to enable you to bear the fatigue of the ride."

Again Julia attempted to speak, but her words were not yet audible. With difficulty she swallowed the cordial Doctor Sydney had ordered, which seeming to restore some degree of animation to her languid frame, Mrs. Fielding took the opportunity of again urging their immediate departure. Henry begged leave to support her to the carriage. "And I too," said Harriet, putting her arm round her waist, "I too will be the supporter of my dear Julia."

She passively permitted them to raise her from the chair, when, as if recollecting herself, she shrunk suddenly from their assisting arms, exclaiming, "Oh! never, never, never shall the house of Mrs. Fielding be contaminated by the reception of a wretch like me. Here let me hide myself from a world that will despise me, and here let me die in peace." The effort she made in

in pronouncing these words shook her whole frame; her eyes rolled wildly round, and she seemed speedily relapsing into the same disordered state from which she had so lately recovered.

In vain did Harriet second Mrs. Fielding's kind intreaties with all the soothing eloquence of friendship. She made no other reply than by clinging to the bed-post, and several times repeating, in a hollow tone, "No, no, here, here," and some other disjointed words, all, however, plainly indicative of her determined resolution of not being removed.

Henry at length put an end to the contest by declaring, that it would be injurious in her present state to persist in it any further.

'Here then, my love, you shall stay for to-day,' said Mrs. Fielding, 'provided you will suffer yourself to be put immediately to bed, and take whatever Doctor Sydney orders for you.'

It was then agreed, that she should be left to the care of Harriet, who would on no account leave her. Nor did Henry require the motive of Harriet's presence to determine him to devote as much of his time as was not engaged by other patients, to the relief of this unhappy girl; though as his hopes rested more upon the efficacy of confidential friendship than on the exertion of medical skill, they depended on Harriet still more than on himself. After the departure of Mrs. Fielding and Maria he withdrew, telling Harriet she would find him in the parlour whenever she thought his attendance necessary. Harriet smiled her approbation of his kind solicitude, and as soon as he was gone, urged Julia to permit herself to be immediately undressed. Julia made no opposition to her proposal, and as

Harriet

Harriet observed her uneasiness at the approach of strangers, she herself performed the office of her maid. While she endeavoured to confine within the small cap, the matron had provided her, those beautiful tresses which she had so often seen adorned with the nicest care, and remembered how proud Captain Delmond used to be of their luxuriant growth, she was so forcibly struck with the contrast the present moment presented, that she could not restrain the falling tear. Julia perceived the tender emotion; and seizing Harriet's hand, pressed it to her lips.

"My good, my gentle Harriet!" said she, in a low and tremulous voice, "you alone, of all the world, will have compassion on me. It is your innate virtue alone that will not fear contamination from a wretch like me. Oh that my father had had such a child!" Then leaning her head against Harriet's shoulder, she burst into a fresh agony of tears. It was a considerable time before Harriet's utmost efforts could restore her to any degree of composure; at length she was conveyed to bed, and a soporific draught soon gave a temporary oblivion to her sorrows.

Towards the close of evening, Henry, who shared with his amiable mistress the task of watching the slumbers of their unhappy friend, was called out of the room. He soon returned, followed by his father, who, to Miss Orwell's great surprise, led in his hand the almost-forgotten Bridgetina. She took no notice of Harriet, but with trembling steps followed Mr. Sydney to the bed-side. On beholding the face of Julia, she started, and laying hold of Mr. Sydney's arm, 'Why,' said she, 'did you not tell me she was dead!'

"Nay, shrink not from this sight," said Mr. Sydney,

Sydney, without noticing her mistake, "but in that pale face and altered form contemplate the fruits of your boasted system of happiness and virtue. Lovely, indeed, very lovely was this fallen flower! and long might it have bloomed the delight of every heart, had it not been deprived of those supports which God and Nature had assigned it. Sweet innocent! how cruel was the spoiler that laid thy glory in the dust! how detestable the arts that led to thy destruction!"

Bridgetina, though not remarkable for the quickness of her feelings, was affected. She sobbed aloud. In pity to her distress, and in apprehension that Julia might be disturbed by her noisy grief, Harriet took pains to comfort her. She told her they had every reason to hope for Miss Delmond's speedy recovery. "Even the wound which her peace of mind has received is not mortal," said she; "she will apply to the balm of consolation, and the principles of religion will aid the power of time, and restore her to tranquillity."

"She is not then dead!" cried Bridgetina, eagerly pressing forward. "She breathes! I see she breathes. Look how she smiles! but ah! how ghastly is that smile! how unlike the playful smile of Julia! What has wrought this change?"

"It has been wrought," said Mr. Sydney, "by the same delusive principles that have seduced you from the path of filial duty. Had nature bestowed on you a form as beautiful, or a face as fair, you too would have been the prey of lust, and the victim of infamy. Be thankful that you have escaped a fate so dreadful. Repent of having ever dared it; and by your
future

future behaviour to your fond mother, strive to make amends for your past conduct."

Bridgetina wept bitterly, but did not refuse her hand to Mr. Sydney, who led her out of the room, without having given the least disturbance by their presence to the profound slumbers of Julia.

In order to account for the appearance of our heroine at this juncture, it is necessary to mention the proceedings of Mr. Sydney subsequent to the interview with Mr. Myope, which has been already related. Mr. Sydney (though a clergyman) was neither *dictatorial*, *impatient of contradiction*, *harsh in his censures*, nor *illiberal in his judgments*.* He saw the prejudices of Myope with compassion; he felt for the situation in which his false principles had plunged him, with the acutest sensibility; and was impelled by his benevolence to exert every power of his soul for the restoration of his peace.

The mind of Mr. Myope was now in a state peculiarly favourable to the reception of new impressions. The ardour with which he had embraced the new theory of morals was somewhat abated. Circumstances had occurred, which even before the desertion of his friend and mistress, had considerably cooled his zeal. This event had given a new turn to his reflections, and he began to doubt whether the recent discoveries in morality were likely to be attended with all the beneficial consequences to mankind, which, in the moment of enthusiasm he had so fondly predicted. The antipathy he had imbibed against the clerical character, made him receive the first advances of Mr. Sydney with reluctance; but he soon found that zeal is not necessarily accompanied with arrogance, and that a preacher

* See Enquirer, p. 232.

of

of Christianity is not always of consequence *dogmatical and intolerant*.

As Myope had been a zealous leader of several different sects of religionists, it may be supposed that Mr. Sydney could offer to him no new arguments in support of Christianity; but however strange it may appear, so it was, that the light in which the truths of natural and revealed religion were placed by Mr. Sydney, were such as never before had been presented to the mind of the philosopher. He sought not to perplex by logical definitions; he betrayed no zeal for peculiar tenets; he treated the various explanations of particular passages of scripture as of very small importance; and seemed only anxious for the establishment of great and fundamental truths. The God of Mr. Sydney was a God of mercies—a God of consolation—“the God of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of changing.” His gospel, the perfection of benevolence, proclaiming “peace on earth, and good-will towards men.”

The enthusiasm of Mr. Myope kindled at he spoke, but it was not the design of Mr. Sydney to excite enthusiasm. He represented it as the business of religion to regulate the emotions of the heart, to allay the effervescence of the spirits, and to watch over the peculiar tendency of the temper. Its office to conduct the activity of an ardent mind into proper channels, where, instead of being expended in vain speculations, it may be productive of real and substantial good. Far from loading with indiscriminate abuse all the opinions which formed a part of Mr. Myope's system, Mr. Sydney allowed all the merit that was due to the spirit of philanthropy which

which breathed in his notions of benevolence, and gave to his doctrines of sincerity the warmest and most decided applause. But while he applauded the abstract notions entertained of each of these noble principles, he plainly demonstrated their inutility in the direction Mr. Myope had given them ; and proved that to these, as well as to every other virtue, the principles of christianity were the best, the only support. " I do indeed admire and applaud the zeal with which you espouse the cause of the poor and oppressed part of our species," said Mr. Sydney ; " it does honour to your heart. But what does your system do for them ? What does it propose to do ? "

' It proposes,' replied Mr. Myope, ' by enlightening the public mind, to render an equality of conditions, by the voluntary cession of property, universal.'

" Supposing this to be practicable," returned Mr. Sydney, " (though how a person who is at all acquainted with the world or with human nature can make the supposition, I am at a loss to imagine) still it does not appear that happiness is the natural and necessary result. Does the experience of those who are most exempt from the physical evils of life, lead us to form such a conclusion ? I am sure it does not. And what is the present consequence of such doctrines to the objects of your benevolent regard ? To infuse additional gall into the bitter cup of poverty, to add to the burden of human miseries a load of discontent ! How different that system of equality preached by Him who emphatically announced himself the friend of the poor and needy ! What are riches, or honours, or even the less equivocal blessings of liberty and independence, compared with the glorious certainty of
of

of the favour of God, and the enjoyment of immortal happiness? By this hope have millions been supported under the pressure of calamities which your system could never reach; for in it alone is found a cure for the sorrows of the heart. The love of glory and the desire of fame have sometimes, it is true, animated their votaries into a contempt for the evils of pain, and even of death itself; but from the influence of this principle the many must ever be excluded: The man who cherishes it, and is by his situation thrown into obscurity, where his sufferings are unnoticed, or regarded with contempt, must be miserable; but absolute misery can never in any situation be the lot of the christian."

After some little hesitation, the truth of Mr. Sydney's assertion was acknowledged by Mr. Myope; still, however, the enormous evils attendant on the present state of society afforded him an ample field for expatiation and censure. These Mr. Sydney canvassed one by one, as they were pointed out by the philosopher. Some he traced to causes very different from those from which Mr. Myope had deduced them; some he proved to have consequences less injurious than those assigned them; and others he candidly gave up, as subjects of regret and mortification to every thinking mind; while he evidently shewed, that not an evil complained of could have existence in a society, where the spirit of christianity was the ruling principle of every heart.

The impression he made upon his learned adversary was gradual, but it was strong; and at every successive conversation he found him less tenacious of his former theory, and more inclined

clined to admit the proofs of the truth of that doctrine which alone,

“ Amid life’s pains, abasements, emptiness,
 “ The soul can comfort, elevate, and fill ;
 “ Which only, and which amply this, performs ;
 “ Lifts us above life’s pains, her joys above !
 “ Their terrors those, and these their lustre lose ;
 “ Eternity depending covers all.”*

It was on his return from one of these conferences that Mr. Sydney learned the situation of Julia. It immediately occurred to him, that an incident so striking was more likely to produce an effect on the mind of Bridgetina than any argument that could possibly be made use of. Mrs. Fielding readily entered into his views, and impatiently waited to know the result of the interview they then projected, and from which they expected the most salutary effects. How far their expectations were answered shall appear hereafter.

CHAP. XXI.

“ Prostrate fell

“ Before him reverent, and there confess’d
 “ Humbly their faults, and pardon begg’d with tears,
 “ Watering the ground ; and with their sighs the air
 “ Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
 “ Of sorrow unfeign’d, and humiliation meek.”

MILTON,

THE slumbers of Julia were not refreshing. She awoke languid and oppressed, but perfectly restored to her recollection. Harriet, for whom

* Young.

a bed

a bed had been provided in an adjoining room, had retired to snatch a short repose ; and Henry had some hours before been obliged to go to the other end of the town, so that on awaking, the nurse was the only person near her. To her she addressed herself in low and trembling accents, " Pray, pray, good woman, be so kind as to inform me where I am. I thought I came to the Asylum of the Destitute. Yes, I remember the name—the *Asylum of the Destitute*. Is it there I am?"

' Yes,' replied the nurse, ' this is the Asylum of the Destitute.'

" Thank God!" said Julia, " I am then safe. I am under the protection of the virtuous. I believe my head has been disturbed. It has been sadly confused. I thought some dear friends were with me ; but it was all a dream. I now see it was a dream."

' Miss Orwell sat up with you the greatest part of the night,' said the nurse.

" Miss Orwell! Harriet Orwell! Dear amiable girl! And shall I not see her again?"

' She is only lain down to take a little rest. Dr. Sydney insisted on it before he would go away.'

" Henry Sydney too here! Yes, I think I remember seeing him. But how extraordinary is all this! I believe my head is still strangely bewildered, for I can account for nothing."

' It is only the effects of your sleeping draught, Madam. You had better keep quiet for a little time, and it will soon go off ;' replied the judicious nurse, drawing the curtains.

Julia followed her advice, and remained silent till the light footsteps of Harriet attracted her attention. She then quickly withdrew the curtains,

tains, and raising herself up in the bed, held out both her hands to her fair friend, who, tenderly embracing her, made anxious enquiries after her health. "Ah, Harriet! how good, how very good you are! But your kindness overpowers me. When last I saw you, how little did I think I should now be the humbled wretch I am"

"Do not distress yourself, my dear Julia, by too keen a recollection of past events. Over these we have no controul. Let us occupy our minds by the present and the future; and if we do so properly, be assured there is no evil of which good may not be the result."

"Alas! for me no good remains. No, no; for me all is the darkness of despair, the gloom of misery! My father! — Oh, Harriet, you know the circumstances of his death; tell me, then, nay do not conceal it; tell me, if with his latest breath he did not curse his Julia?"

"No, my dear, your father expired in a better frame of mind; his last words were to implore a blessing on you. He never spoke of you with resentment, but pitied your delusion, and I believe from his heart forgave it."

"Did he, indeed! and did he bless me! Oh, my dear, dear papa! how could I—" Here she was interrupted by a flood of tears, which for some time rendered her incapable of holding further converse.

"Do not, my dear Julia," said Harriet, "do not, I beseech you, dwell so much upon the past. Much as I wish to know the particulars of all the cruel circumstances that have led to our present meeting, I will not now permit you to enter upon the sad detail. We shall have sufficient time for this hereafter, as I hope you will find yourself well enough this morning to accompany

company me to Mrs. Fielding's, in whom, I can assure you, you will find a tender and affectionate friend; she will be as a mother to you, till the arrival of your own; and I hope I may this morning have the pleasure of informing Mrs. Delmond, that you are under such respectable protection.'

"Alas! alas! it is impossible. Never can I appear at Mrs. Fielding's; never more can I enjoy the pleasures of society. No, Harriet; I have been a vain, guilty, infatuated creature; but never will I add to my self-condemnation by the meanness of imposture. In retirement, deep retirement, will I bury myself from the notice of the world. Even from you, my kind, my estimable friend—even from you must I hide myself; lest your fair fame should suffer by your deigning to pity such a wretch as I. Oh, I am indeed a wretch!

"Have I not sleep'd a mother's couch in tears,

"And ting'd a father's dying cheek with shame?"

Oh, for me there is no comfort."

'And think you, Julia, that I am a slave to the letter, and a stranger to the *spirit* of virtue! That you have erred, I regret; but that you are sensible of your error, gives you a claim not only to my esteem, but my admiration. For how much less effort does it require to keep in the onward path of virtue, than to recover it when gone but a single step astray? Amply, I am assured, shall your future life compensate the fault of inexperienced youth. Cheer up, then, my Julia; and believe that you may yet be doubly dear to all who ever loved you.'

"Ah, Harriet! your words are a cordial (what a cordial!) to my drooping heart." Here she fervently pressed the hand of Harriet to her lips;

tips; then dropping it, and looking timidly in her face, while a burning blush shot over her pallid cheek, "But you—you know not all my shame. You know not that it *must be public*. I see you are shocked, greatly shocked. Did I not say, that even you would scorn to own me?"

"I am shocked, my love, I confess; but it is with the idea that your sufferings are not yet to have an end. Let us not talk more of this circumstance at present, permit me only to confide it to Mrs. Fielding, on whom you may rely for advice, and in whose tenderness you will find consolation."

"To Mrs. Fielding! Alas, yes, it must be so—but yet—why, Harriet, after all that has befallen me, should false shame bring this cold sweat upon my forehead? But I will conquer it. Do I not deserve the censure I shall meet with? And why should I shrink from my deserts? Tell her, however—pray tell her, that I did not fall a prey to depraved inclination; that my judgment was perverted by argument, not seduced by flattery; and that when I yielded to the specious reasonings of my betrayer, I thought I was setting an example of high-souled virtue, which soared above the vulgar prejudices of the world. It is to vanity—yes, Harriet, I now see it is to vanity (though not the vanity of beauty) that I owe my ruin!"

Here she paused for a little, but Harriet only answering her by a sigh, she thus renewed the conversation. "My mind is still perplexed and bewildered. I have acted upon the sublimest principles of morality; I have been inspired by the most elevated sentiments of virtue. But virtue is happiness—and I am miserable! Is it owing to the prejudices of society that I am so?

Ah! no. My father!—my unhappy father!—Had my heart received no other wound, his death would have transfixed a dagger in its inmost core. But how has it been wounded by another hand! How cruelly torn! O Harriet! my sufferings have been multiplied. I have passed through scenes which would freeze your soul with horror—but I dare not think of them. No, no, let me not think of them. I must avoid distraction--I--"

Harriet, perceiving the agitation of her mind, and fearful of its consequences, tenderly interrupted her, and used every endeavour to soothe her into composure. Henry soon after came in, and while he made his enquiries after Julia's health, Harriet stepped down to Mrs. Fielding, who was below in the parlour. She there informed her of all that had passed in the late conversation. They then consulted together on what was now to be done with the poor unfortunate, and as Harriet gave it as her opinion, that she would not be prevailed upon to remove to Mrs. Fielding's house, it was agreed, that she should remain where she was until the arrival of her mother, who was immediately to be sent for. Mrs. Fielding then begged leave to wait upon her; Julia would have excused herself, on account of her being still in bed; she had attempted to rise but had fainted in the attempt, and was advised by the Doctor not to get up till the evening, when he hoped she would find herself restored to greater strength. Mrs. Fielding waved the apology, and though her first appearance threw Julia (who conjectured the subject of her conversation with Harriet) into the deepest confusion, the sympathetic tenderness of her address was so truly maternal, that it quickly re-assured her confidence, and restored her serenity.

The

The natural openness and candour of Julia's mind suggested the propriety of giving her friends a faithful relation of all that had befallen her ; but neither strength nor feelings were equal to the task. Mrs. Fielding and Harriet, perceiving that the bare recollection of some of these events was attended with a degree of horror that shook her tender frame, united their endeavours to recall her from the subject. They spoke of her health, and of the means necessary for its restoration ; of these Mrs. Fielding mentioned country air as the most efficacious. She said, she had upon her estate in Hertfordshire a charming cottage, where Mrs. Delmond and Julia might enjoy all the advantages of retirement, and remain as long as they pleased unnoticed and unknown. When convenient for them to quit it, if they chose to remove to Ireland, she had there some friends, to whom she could introduce them in such a manner as would procure their welcome reception into a very agreeable circle of society.

" I understand your kind hint, my dear Madam," said Julia, " I perfectly understand it ; but you must not think me an ungrateful creature if I decline your generous offer. I would live—yes, it is now my wish to live, that by my future life I may make some amends for my past misconduct. But I greatly fear I have, in a moment of despair, of heart-rending agony, shortened the period of my existence. O that I could recal that moment ! O that I may not have been a double murderer ! My father ! and my child ! Nay, I pray you do not look upon me with such horror ! I cannot bear that look !" covering up her head with the bed clothes.

' Fear not the looks of us, thy frail fellow-mortals.'

mortals,' rejoined Mrs. Fielding; 'to the Searcher of hearts thy humility and thy penitence will be acceptable. And shall we, who know not how little of our boasted virtue we can call our own—we, who are ignorant of the temptations that have assailed thee, dare to pronounce thy condemnation? No, my dear Miss Delmond; far other sentiments, believe me, at this moment inspire our breasts. But if you feel my presence too much for you, I will retire and leave you with your friend Miss Orwell, to whom you may safely unburthen every feeling of your heart.'

Again Julia lifted up her head, and pressing Mrs. Fielding's hand, which had kindly taken hold of her's, "Surely," said she, "there is a God, a Providence, a reward hereafter for goodness such as your's. But if there be a God, if there be an hereafter, what must my situation be?"

'That God, my dear, who in the things that are made hath not left himself without a witness, is, by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, revealed to us as a father and a friend. Surrounded as we are by the glorious proofs of a Supreme Intelligence, it is scarcely possible for a sane mind to doubt the existence of a God. But our peculiar happiness is to have our vague and imperfect ideas upon this subject cleared and explained by Him who brought life and immortality to light; our great master came into the world "not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might have life." He addressed not himself to the perfect. He professed not to call the "righteous (or those who proudly deemed themselves such) but sinners to repentance," and revealed to them the Almighty as a God of hope and

and consolation. Do not then, my sweet girl, encourage the language of despair. Acquaint yourself with the promises of the Gospel, and when the world withdraws its consolations, these shall support your soul. I hope, however, that you have not—no, assuredly you have not, done any thing with a wilful intention of shortening your existence?”

“Oh! yes, yes! If there be guilt in seeking to fly from a miserable existence, I am guilty! In a moment of phrensy and desperation I swallowed poison, I hoped it would have rid me of a wretched being, and buried my woes in the dark abyss of annihilation; but no sooner had I done the dreadful deed, than Nature recoiled, and death, which had long been the only object of my wishes, appeared horrible to my view. Oh! how my soul then struggled within me! What palpitations, what terrors laid hold of my distracted mind! ’Twas then, that I first suspected the possibility of my having cherished false opinions; then that I first began to fear, that there *might* be reality in those I had been taught to despise. The conversations I had held with you, my Harriet, rushed upon my recollection; we had each of us acted upon the principles we had adopted; but, oh! how different was the result! These and a thousand other agonizing reflections tore my throbbing heart, while momentarily I expected its beating pulse to be arrested by the cold hand of death. In this I was disappointed; cold shiverings, indeed, came upon me, and a numbness, which has not yet left me, seized my limbs, but death came not. I fear, however, the consequences will still be fatal—if not to myself, to——”

Here she stopped, and Mrs. Fielding kindly

renewed those soothing assurances of divine aid, and divine mercy, which, however lightly thought of in the gay hours of prosperity, are found a cordial to the sinking heart.

Mrs. Fielding's zeal was not disgraced by bigotry, nor was it inflamed by superstition; she did not seek to overwhelm the already broken spirit by aggravating the colour of past offences, but rather made it her endeavour to re-assure her confidence in the possibility of future happiness from future exertions of virtue.

It was her opinion, that the support of reputation being found to be a strong additional motive to virtue, it ought not to be put out of the power of the unfortunate female, who, conscious of her error, is desirous to retrieve it by her after conduct. On this account, in the next conversation she held with Julia, she was led again to propose the plan she had suggested for her going first into the country, where she could enjoy all the privacy her circumstances required; and then removing to a situation, where the past incidents of her life might remain for ever buried in oblivion.

Julia listened to her proposal with respectful attention, and then, though in faltering accents, with a look and manner that denoted the utmost firmness and composure, she thus replied:—"I am fully, I am gratefully sensible of the goodness of your intention; your kind consideration for my reputation is the suggestion of pure benevolence, and believe me, I feel it as I ought. Do not, therefore, my dear Madam, attribute to perverseness or pride my opposition to your proposal; but it is a subject on which I have deeply thought; on which I have fully made up my mind. If you will have the goodness to listen

to my reasons you will, I flatter myself, acknowledge the force of the arguments that have determined me."

Mrs. Fielding affectionately intreating her to speak without reserve, she thus proceeded:—
 "The peculiar disadvantages under which our sex is doomed to labour, early appeared to me so enormous, that it made me listen with avidity to the reveries of the new theorists, whose doctrines promised emancipation from the tyranny of prejudice; and seemed to offer the rights of equality to the hitherto degraded part of the human race. Independence I considered as essential to virtue. But what was the independence to which I had resort? Alas! to throw off the gentle, the endearing restraints of parental authority for the yoke of a domineering passion, which bowed my soul in subjection to a man who has since proved the most barbarous and unworthy of the human race! In the height of my enthusiasm for the new doctrines I had embraced, I was intoxicated with the idea, that for me it was reserved to point out to my sex a new and nobler path to glory than the quiet duties of domestic life. To convince them, that equal to man in all the most noble qualities of the mind, we ought to scorn the meanness of confining our notions of virtue to one point; and that it was to our giving way to the prejudices of society in this particular, we owed the degradation and misery of our sex. You, Madam, will wonder at my strange delusion, when I confess that I considered the loss of my honour as a sacrifice to principle, and that in this idea I struggled to overcome the instinctive repugnance of that delicacy which Nature had implanted, and education cherished, in my breast. I was taught to

glory in having asserted the prerogative of human nature in a free and independent choice; but when I expected the meed of fame, I was plunged into the depth of misery, and goaded by the stings of remorse. Alas! what idea can words convey of what I have suffered!—Robbed, betrayed, deserted, by the man on whom my foolish heart rested as a lover, counsellor, and friend! The cruel certainty of his unworthiness would have been sufficient to have made me miserable for ever. But this, even this, was light to what I suffered, when in the den of demons, to which I was betrayed, I saw in an old newspaper, put as a wrapper about some writing-paper, the account of my father's death. Then, indeed, the excess of horror seized my soul. The wretches that surrounded me were to me no longer objects of hate or terror. On myself, on my own guilty head all my execrations were poured. The vilest of the vile, compared with me, I thought was innocent. In the phrensy of despair I endeavoured to escape existence; but no sooner had I swallowed the deadly potion, than the death I so ardently had wished for became dreadful to my imagination. Oh! the struggles of that moment! But they are not to be described. Blessed be God! that however dreadful, they were salutary. In the violence of the conflict the strength of contending passions seemed to have been exhausted. A sort of gloomy tranquillity succeeded, which was not interrupted, save by my renewed apprehensions of the wicked designs of the people of the vile house, where I knew myself to be a prisoner. Many were my plans for escape which accident had rendered abortive. At length, on the certainty that violence was intended me, and that the wretched

wretched woman had actually received the price of my person from a man of seeming gravity, who, while he kept what is called a fair character in society, and was himself the father of daughters, whose honour he would have protected with his life, would not have scrupled to gratify his own brutal passions at the expence of the temporal and eternal happiness of a poor young creature destitute of all protection. I collected all the vigour of my mind, and determined to run every risk, in order to effect my escape. Having taken my resolution, I affected a degree of composure, and even of cheerfulness, that my design might be the less suspected; and the moment that I found myself unobserved, in pursuance of my plan, I hastened up to the garret, got out of the window upon the leads, and as fast as my benumbed limbs would permit, slowly crept upon my hands and knees along the different houses, till I reached them at the end of the street. There I likewise found the garret-window open; with some difficulty I entered, and quickly shutting after me, retired into a corner, where leaning against the wall, I stood gasping for breath, and trembling in every limb.

“A little kitten had, without my perceiving it, crept in at the half-open door. A boy of about four years old came in pursuit of it; but seeing me, screamed and fled. New terrors then seized upon me, as I made no doubt he would alarm the family, and that I should be treated as a thief, perhaps consigned to the horrors of a prison; but as no prison was so dreadful in my eyes as that I had just quitted, I resolved to bear my destiny with patience. Part of my apprehensions were soon fulfilled. The mistress of the house, followed by her maid-servant

and a lad of about fourteen, armed with a huge stick, came up to me, and almost in one voice demanded how I came there ?

“ I came hither for protection—for deliverance ! O save me, dear Madam,” said I, dropping on my knees ; “ save me from death, and worse than death ! ”

‘ Where did you come from ? ’ said the mother of the little boy, who now ventured to approach me.

I told her. She at first seemed to doubt my veracity, but did not hesitate (before her doubts on this head were removed) to assure me of temporary protection.

‘ Whether what you say be true or no,’ said she, ‘ you are young, and evidently unfortunate. I have children of my own, and who knows what may yet befall them ! So, poor thing, I will not betray you. Here, however, these wretches may soon trace you ; and how can a poor widow defend you ? I would therefore advise you to put yourself under the protection of a magistrate, who will put you in a way of returning to your friends.’

“ Alas ! ” said I, “ I have no friends ! Oh God ! what will become of me ! ”

‘ Take courage, Miss,’ said the servant-maid, taking my hand with an appearance of sympathy for which my heart shall never cease to be grateful, ‘ there is a refuge for you, a blessed refuge.—*The Asylum of the Destitute*. There I myself was saved from misery and destruction. There you will be received, and treated with kindness and humanity ; and if you appear to be a proper behaved person, will have every encouragement to continue in a virtuous course.”

“ Where,” cried I, “ oh, where is this blessed

bleſſed retreat? Let me fly to it inſtantly. I will do any thing, I will ſubmit to any thing—only to get permiſſion to live among the good and virtuous. I care not how humble, how lowly—for I am truly humbled.”

I would inſtantly have ſet out, but the good people, obſerving how ill I was, propoſed my remaining there till the evening, and that in the mean time I ſhould take ſome reſreſhment and repoſe; and much, indeed, did I ſtand in need of both. They ſupported me between them to a bed-chamber on the firſt floor; and there, by their advice, I was about to lay me down, when a loud knocking at the door called away both miſtreſs and maid, and threw me into freſh trepidation. I liſtened, and heard a man's voice. It was loud and terrible. A thief, he ſaid, had eſcaped from juſtice, and muſt have contrived to hide herſelf in ſome houſe on that ſide of the ſtreet; he therefore adviſed them to ſecure their doors, as if they permitted her to get off, they would be conſidered as acceſſaries in her crimes. I could not hear what reply was made by the miſtreſs of the houſe, and dreadful was the ſuſpence I remained in till ſhe returned to me. She came, but ſuſpicion was not in her looks.

‘Alas! poor thing,’ ſaid ſhe, ‘you muſt depart from hence immediately. I have ſent Hannah for a coach, and in it ſhe ſhall conduct you to the Aſylum; for I believe, yes, I *do* believe you are innocent.’

I had no power to reply. She wrapped me in a long cloak, and put her own bonnet and veil upon my head, to conceal me from the people who might be watching for me in the ſtreet. I happily got into the coach without obſervation, and ſupported by the kind-hearted Hannah,

reached

reached this blessed place in safety. Ah! how little did I then imagine who I was here to meet with! The agitation I had undergone, together with the want of food and sleep, affected my brain; I was sensible that it was affected. One image took possession of my mind—the image of my dying father. I conceived myself doomed to suffer as his murderer, and that all I had undergone, all I yet might have to undergo, was in expiation of this foul offence. Alas! the return of reason, though it enables me to methodise my thoughts, takes not from the bitterness of this reflection. But how have I wandered from the subject on which I designed to have explained myself! Forgive me, dear Madam, for I now fear I shall exhaust your patience.”

“Not my patience, dear Miss Delmond, but your own strength, is in danger of being exhausted by the continuance of the conversation. If, however, you do not feel yourself too much fatigued, I shall be glad to hear the plan you intend to adopt, and the reasons you have for thinking it preferable to mine; which was intended to save your character from obloquy, and to restore to society one whose many virtues may still eminently adorn it.”

“For your good intentions, I thank you—from my heart I thank you,” replied Julia; “but low as I am now sunk in my own estimation, sensible as I am of the faultiness of my conduct, and humbled under the consciousness, as my soul truly is, I must shrink still lower than I am, not to feel myself degraded by the practice of any species of imposture. Whether the unrelenting laws of society with regard to our sex are founded in injustice or otherwise, is not for me to determine. Happy they who submit
without

without reluctance to their authority! But first to set them at defiance, and then under false pretences to shrink from the penalty, what is this but to add hypocrisy to presumption—to add an unjustifiable (because deliberate) crime to an error, which perhaps may receive some mitigation on the score of human frailty? Forgive me, Madam, for speaking in this manner on a subject you have evidently considered in a different light; but I know you are too generous to find fault with me for differing from you.”

‘Find fault with you, my dear!’ said Mrs. Fielding; ‘no, I honour you in my heart for your noble sentiments, so full of integrity and honour. I do not pretend to combat them, but in justification of myself shall only mention the motives that led to my proposal. On unsullied character, not only our reception in society, but our usefulness in life depends. The woman who is suspected of having made a false step, but who, by assiduously concealing it, shews some regard for reputation, will ever meet with more indulgence from the world than she, who by openly avowing it, seems to brave its censures. In the latter case she becomes a mark for public scorn to point the finger at; all the virtues she may possess are of no avail, or rather they are considered by the world, what certain dogmatists affirm of the virtues of the unregenerate, as so many *shining sins*. Her dishonour attaches not merely to herself alone, but extends to all with whom she is connected. Should her future conduct be ever so circumspect, nay should it be ever so exemplary over those of her own sex who are most inclined to applaud it, the fetters of public opinion will still exert a restraining influence, and very few will dare to own her. Men alone

alone will presume to express for her any friendship; and thus thrown upon the protection of men, while her heart beats indignant at what she considers as injustice, who can answer for the consequences? From all these evils who would not wish to preserve a character so estimable? Have not your errors been already sufficiently expiated by your sufferings? Why then should you be lost to society at a period of life when you might enter it with every advantage? You are but yet in the very early morning of your life; by removing to another kingdom, you may in a manner recommence its course. Nor can the concealment of the past be properly termed imposition; that belongs to false pretences only, and I am convinced the conduct of your future life will vindicate the reality of your claim to respect and veneration.*

Julia's languid eyes were suffused with tears of gratitude. "How generously do you endeavour to reconcile me to myself," she exclaimed; "but it cannot be. Hope of future happiness can never reanimate my heart. On me the sun of joy is set for ever. The only ray of peace or consolation that can ever shine upon me, must be from the approbation of my own mind, reverberated and confirmed by the approbation of those to whom it is fully known. Mortifying to me would be the applause, oh! very mortifying the expressions of esteem I might receive from strangers; who, if they knew the circumstances. I must then labour to conceal, would spurn me from them with contempt. No, my dear Madam; my place in society I have forfeited; nor will I endeavour to regain it by clandestine means. I will not add to my transgression by relinquishing the duties I have still to perform. If I am
the

the means of bringing a helpless being into the world under circumstances the most deplorable, I will not desert it. Oh, no! Cruelly, very cruelly has it already been deserted by one parent! and shall its mother, for the sake of preserving a false appearance to the world, act a part equally inhuman? Never! never! The infamy I have brought upon its innocent head I shall freely share; and devote my future life to making it what recompence is in my power, for the inauspicious circumstances under which it is for ever doomed to labour." As she thus spoke, her fine eyes regained a momentary lustre, heightened by the vivid blush that gleamed on her pale cheek wet with tears.

Mrs. Fielding gazing on her as she spoke, felt for her a degree of admiration mingled with pity and regret, that caused sensations too big for utterance. She folded her maternal arms round her, and pressed her to her heart. 'You are, indeed you are, an admirable creature!' she at length exclaimed. 'Your arguments make me ashamed of the comparative meanness of my own sentiments upon this subject; and approbation is too poor a word to express the sense I have of your magnanimity.'

"Alas!" replied Julia, "how little am I deserving of such praise! Were all my tears, tears of penitence for past misconduct, and did my heart possess sufficient firmness to throw from its affections the man who has proved himself unworthy of its esteem, then indeed I might boast some little portion of magnanimity. But ah! how feeble are the sentiments of virtue, when they prove so ineffectual in subduing the strength of an unhappy passion!"

"Let not this consideration too much discourage

courage you,' said Mrs. Fielding. The affections of love are much more warm and vivid than those of friendship; and yet even in friendship, where it has been misplaced, the heart is long, very long in receiving the conviction that is forced upon it by reason. Affection still lingers in the bosom, even after esteem has taken its everlasting flight; nor does it finally forsake it, till the mind has experienced the most exquisite degree of anguish in the contest. Still, where the love of virtue reigns, the love of its opposite will in the end be conquered. Take courage, then, my dear, and employ your mind, not so much in ruminating on the past, as in forming plans for your future conduct."

The entrance of Harriet and Maria, who just then returned from an airing which Mrs. Fielding had prevailed on them to take, put an end to the conversation. A kind contest then took place between the two friends about which should remain with Julia, who was at length called upon to determine it. Affectionately pressing the hand of each, "Between two such cordials," said she, "it is difficult for me to choose; but here is my physician, and to his decision I shall leave it."

Henry had come with the secret hope that Harriet would return to Hanover-square with him and Mrs. Fielding. Since the arrival of Julia at the Asylum, he had enjoyed little of Harriet's company, and his heart was deeply sensible of the privation; but when he met the eyes of Julia, and read in them the wish for Harriet's stay; when he reflected on their greater intimacy, which must afford to Julia the pleasure of unreserved confidence, he checked the prompt wish

with of selfishness, and declared that Harriet should remain.

And here, lest the reader should not be inclined to give to the conduct of Henry all the merit it deserves, we beg the favour of him to pause for a moment, and give a candid answer to the few following questions.

Pray, sir, have you ever been in love? If not, you may go on to the next chapter.

"You have." Well then, be so obliging as to say how often you have sacrificed the slightest gratification of passion to the calls of friendship or benevolence? Pray, how often have you disobeyed the dictates of selfishness, from the consideration of conferring pleasure on any individual of your acquaintance? What have you sacrificed to the interests even of the object of your passion? One selfish desire?

"No. Passion was too powerful."

Justly, then, may you appreciate the nobleness of Henry Sydney's heart; which, filled with a passion as strong and pure as ever warmed a human breast, was yet sufficiently capacious to have room for the sentiments of friendship, and the feelings of benevolence.

CHAP. XIV.

"A wrench from all we *love*, from all we *are*;

"A sun extinguish'd! a just-opening grave!

"And oh! the last, last what? (can words express?)

"Thought reach?) the last, last *silence* of a friend."

IT is high time to return to Bridgetina, to whom, as the ostensible heroine of these memoirs, it is our duty to attend. The inauspicious

cancer

career of her *quondam* friends, if it did not effect a sudden change in her opinions, considerably damped the ardour of her zeal. Neither the reasonings of Mr. Sydney or Mrs. Fielding were calculated for making a convert of one, who to a very limited understanding united an active imagination; but they were so unanswerable that they abated the confidence of self-conceit, and tempered her dislike to the doctrines of Christianity.

Though this were all that was expected by Mr. Sydney, it did not perfectly satisfy Mrs. Fielding. "It is very extraordinary," said she, in speaking to Mr. Sydney on this subject, "it is very extraordinary that Miss Botherim should be so obstinately blind, as not to perceive the shocking consequences of the erroneous opinions she has adopted. Does she not see to what they have already led? How can she refuse assent to demonstration so strong, so full as that you have just now been delivering? And to what is she thus wedded?—to a system that annihilates every future hope, and reduces us to a level with the beasts that perish! I can no way account for such obstinacy of unbelief."

"My dear Madam," replied Mr. Sydney, "you do not sufficiently attend to the nature of the human mind. Not to mention the tenaciousness of pride, which naturally revolts at the acknowledgment of conviction, we must, I fear, make greater allowances than you seem inclined to do, for the strength of early association. Among those who were eye-witnesses of the miracles of our Saviour, we are told that many doubted—of what? Not of the miracles, for these they do not appear to have attempted to deny. The unbelief of the Jewish sceptics were by *their early prejudices* directed

referred to a different point ; they acknowledged the miracle, but doubted whether it was of God, or proceeded from the power of some demon. In imbuing the minds of our children with notions of religion, we too often represent to them not only the great and leading truths of revelation, but every minutia of our own peculiar tenets, as inseparable links of one great chain, of which no one can be broken without destroying the whole. The early association which we thus create, is frequently productive of the most unhappy consequences. By it a long range of out-works of unequal strength are exposed to the attack of the enemy, where, if one be found untenable, the whole must of course surrender. In conversing with Miss Botherim, I have more than once had occasion to remark the truth of the above observation. But let us not expect too much at once ; time, her ripened judgment, reading, and observation, may effect a change in her mind of greater consequence than a sudden conviction could possibly produce.

Mrs. Fielding acquiesced in this opinion, and leaving Bridgetina's conversion to Mr. Sydney, and the means by him prescribed, she entirely occupied herself in the concerns of the more amiable and more unfortunate Julia.

Doctor Orwell and his youngest daughter were on the eve of setting out for London to attend Harriet's nuptials, when they received the account of Julia's re-appearance, which Doctor Orwell was begged to communicate to Mrs. Delmond. He did so, but found the poor lady in no situation for undertaking an immediate journey. Ever since her husband's death a slow fever had preyed upon her constitution, which gradually increasing, had at length brought her to the very brink of

the grave. Till the elopement of Julia her mind had never experienced the dominion of a strong emotion; she was, therefore, unequal to its controul. Incessantly dwelling on the ingratitude of her daughter, who had been the object of her pride as much as of her affections, her grief was embittered by resentment; which, from the taciturnity and reserve of her temper, being denied a vent, preyed inwardly, and consumed the vital flame. And here it is worthy of remark, that while Captain Delmond execrated the seducer, and his wife bitterly arraigned the conduct of the seduced; neither one or other ever once cast a retrospective glance upon what they themselves had done. The aunt of Mrs. Delmond had been little less hurt by her conduct, than she was by that of her daughter. But *her* resentment she had deemed unreasonable and absurd; so different is the allowance self-love permits us to make for the feelings of others, and for our own!

Till informed by Doctor Orwell, Mrs. Delmond had not the most distant idea of Julia's being still unmarried. The intelligence aggravated the feelings of resentment and despair. And after a silence, occasioned by the excess of agitation, she broke out into the bitterest reproaches, not only against Julia, but against all who should receive or countenance her. In vain did Doctor Orwell preach up to her the doctrine of christian charity and forgiveness. She told him, that if he gave such encouragement to wickedness, we thought his own children would do well to put his charity to the proof; and concluded by declaring, that were she even able to undertake the journey, nothing should induce her to go to see a wretch, whose infamous conduct had brought disgrace on all connected with her.

After

After having exhausted her strength by venting the feelings of resentment, she apparently sunk into her usual state of torpid apathy. But it was only in appearance, for a variety of contending emotions continued to struggle in her breast; where, though grief, anger, and resentment were first in place, they could not overcome the yearnings of the mother in her heart. The struggle was too much for her weak frame to support, and an increase of fever was the fatal consequence. Dr. Orwell was no sooner informed by Mr. Gubbles of her danger, than he dispatched a messenger for the nearest physician; but ere he could arrive Mrs. Delmond was no more.

Having given the necessary directions for the interment, the Doctor was urged by his daughter Marianne to set out immediately on their intended journey, as they would now have little enough time to reach London before the wedding.

"You are mistaken, my dear," said Dr. Orwell, "so much must the news of this event add to the misery of the wretched Julia, and so much will she now require the soothing support of friendship, that I know not Harriet's heart, if it have not the generosity to defer her own happiness, in order to alleviate the pressure of another's anguish. There is no fear, therefore, of our not being in time to the wedding; but to gratify you, we shall set out to-morrow."

They accordingly did set out, and arrived at Mrs. Fielding's the evening of the following day. There they found only servants to receive them, and from them they learned, that Mrs. Fielding and her guests had spent the greater part of the day at the Asylum, from whence they were not yet returned. Thither Dr. Orwell, after com-
mitting

mitting Marianne to the care of Mrs. Fielding's housekeeper, directly drove.

He was shewn into a small parlour, where the first object that struck his eye was old *Quinten*, leaning against the window, and with the hand that pressed upon his forehead covering his eyes, so that he did not perceive the Doctor's approach.

"*Quinten!*" cried *Dr. Orwell*, "is it you? How came you here? I did not know you had left W——."

'Ah! sir,' said *Quinten*, 'could I hear that my master's daughter was ill, and in distress, and not come to offer her my poor services? Susan no sooner told me of the news you had brought my mistress, which, by reason of her being in the next room, she could not avoid hearing, than I begged her leave to march, and set out that very Thursday evening; though she did not seem overpleased at my coming, I know she will thank me afterwards, when—'

"You do not then know that *Mrs. Delmond* is dead?" said *Doctor Orwell*, interrupting him.

'My mistress dead?' exclaimed *Quinten*. 'Oh! that is heavy news indeed! But Miss *Julia* will never hear it! Oh! no. She will never know that her mother died without forgiving her; but God will be more merciful. He will receive the penitent to his bosom, and the dear child shall be an angel of light in heaven!'

"Is Miss *Delmond* then so very ill?" asked *Doctor Orwell*.

'Ill, indeed,' replied *Quinten*. 'But here is Miss *Orwell*, and she will tell you all.'

Quinten then retired, while *Harriet*, rushing into the room, threw her arms round her father's neck, and wept and sobbed aloud upon his bosom.

"Be calm, my love," said *Dr. Orwell*, "my darling

darling child! How should I bow in gratitude to that Providence whose grace has been so liberally bestowed upon you; every action of your life endears you still further to my heart." Then fondly kissing her, he wiped away the tears that still continued to flow from her eyes, and again begged her to be composed. "I am afraid to ask for Julia," said he; "from your tears I fear it is all over."

'No,' replied Harriet, 'she yet lives, but that is all that can now be said. The night before last she was seized with spasms and other symptoms, which the Doctor immediately pronounced fatal. Since then she has suffered the extreme of pain; but suffered with a patience, a meekness, and resignation, that deserve a higher term than fortitude, for fortitude is sometimes the effort of despair. Her's is the effect of sincere penitence, and lively hope in the mercies of God through that Saviour to whom she has been brought, effectually, I trust, brought through sufferings. But you must see her. I can place you where you will be unperceived, for the sight of you would make her, perhaps, renew her enquiries concerning her mother, and she knows nothing of her death. It would be cruel to disturb her last moments by the intelligence.' So saying, she took her father's hand, and silently led him into Julia's room.

Accustomed as Doctor Orwell was to the sight of a death-bed, he never without awe could approach the solemn scene,

"Where darkness brooding o'er unfinish'd fate,

"With raven wing incumbent, waits the hour,

"Dread hour! that interdicts all future change."

But never were his feelings more sensibly impressed than on the present occasion. The first object that presented itself was old Mr. Sydney, sitting

sitting in an arm-chair by the bedside, his hands clasped, and his eyes directed towards Heaven in mental prayer, while a few unbidden tears stole down his venerable cheeks. Mr. Churchill knelt by the bed, and pressed one of the cold hands of the dying Julia between both of his; while Maria, sitting behind her on the bed, supported in her arms her feeble frame. She was still addressing herself to Mr. Churchill, but in a voice too low and broken to be distinctly heard. To what she said Churchill was too much affected to permit him to make any other reply than by kissing her hand, and bathing it with his tears. After a short pause—"Heaven will, in this dear virtuous girl," said she, attempting to join Maria's hand to his, "amply reward you for your goodness. She too will act the part of a child to my poor mother—alas! a more deserving child than I have been towards her! Oh, that I could recall the past! But it cannot be. Penitence is all I now can offer—and that I hope God and she will accept of. Farewell, sir! may God reward you for your goodness to my mother! He only can."

Again Churchill kissed her hand with emphatic tenderness, and covering his face with his handkerchief, hastily withdrew to give vent to the feelings he could not controul. Maria's eyes followed him to the door with looks of tender sympathy, which seemed eager to express how much his sensibility endeared him to her heart.

Julia observed her looks, and tenderly taking her hand, "You will be happy, dear Maria," said she, "and you deserve to be so. Harriet too, my dear Harriet, she will be happy with her worthy Sydney; doubly happy even here, for having kept constantly in view the happiness of hereafter. Where is Miss Bothetim? I think I have

I have now strength to speak to her, and it may not be so long. I should like now to see her."

Harriet instantly went out, and returned leading in Bridgetina, who seemed to enter with some reluctance. She appeared pale and frightened, and seemed to dread the solemnity of a dying scene—a scene she had never yet witnessed. 'You must come near her,' said Harriet, as she drew Bridgetina on; 'it would distress her too much to speak to you at this distance.'

Julia attempted to hold out her feeble hand as she approached her, which Bridgetina took in her's without speaking.

"You tremble, my dear!" said Julia. "Does it then so greatly shock you to see me thus? Ah, Bridgetina! could I indeed impress you with a sense of what my mind now feels, I should not die in vain. You see me now on the threshold of eternity—that eternity, of which we have made a jest, but which we must acknowledge was never by any argument to a certainty disproved; improbable we were taught to believe it, but impossible by mere man it could never be pronounced. I am now convinced, oh! thoroughly convinced, of its awful truth. I believe that I shall, ere the lapse of many hours, appear before the throne of God! that God whose will I have despised, whose providence I have arraigned, nay, whose very being I have dared to deny! Blessed be his mercy, that did not leave me to perish in my iniquity!"

After a pause, occasioned by want of breath, she thus proceeded. "You believe Jesus Christ to have been a moralist and philosopher. Examine, I beseech you, the morality he preached, and you will acknowledge that its teacher could not lay the foundation of such a system in im-

posture. Well did he say of future teachers; *By their fruits ye shall know them.*" What, my Bridgetina, are the fruits of the doctrines we have so unhappily been led to embrace? *In me you behold them!* In vain will you exclaim, in the jargon to which we have been accustomed, against the *prejudices of society*, as if to them were owing the load of misery that sinks me to a premature grave. Ah! no. Those prejudices, against which we have been accustomed so bitterly to rail, I now behold as a salutary fence, which, if I had never dared to overleap, would have secured my peace. Were those barriers broken down, and every woman encouraged by the suffrage of universal applause to act as I have acted, fatal, my dear Bridgetina, very fatal to society, would be the consequence! In my friends here, these dear friends whom Heaven has in mercy sent as ministering angels to smooth the path of death, see the fruits of a firm adherence to the doctrines we have despised! If, like them, I had been taught to devote the actions of every day to my God; and instead of encouraging a gloomy and querulous discontent against the present order of things, had employed myself in a vigilant performance of the duties of my situation, and a scrupulous government of my own heart and inclinations, how very different would my situation now have been! Think of these things, Bridgetina; and if ever you should meet with——but I will not disturb the serenity of my soul by mentioning his name.—Yet why? I carry not with me any resentments to the grave. Tell Vallaton, then, that as a christian I forgive him, and pray God to turn his heart. If mine had been fortified by principle, he never could have seduced it by his sophistry.

sophistry. No. It was not he, it was my own pride, my own vanity, my own presumption, that were the real seducers that undid me. My strength fails. Farewell, my poor Biddy! Nay, do not weep so much. I have now hopes of happiness more sweet, more precious, than aught the world can bestow! Go home to your mother, my Biddy; and in the sober duties of life forget the idle vagaries which our distempered brains dignified with the name of philosophy."

Bridgetina weeping withdrew.

Julia, exhausted by speaking, reclined her head on Maria's bosom, and remained for some minutes silent. She then with a quick motion raised her head, and looked around the room. "Who is now here?" said she. "Methinks I do not see distinctly. This I know is Harriet's hand. Dear Harriet, oh, when you draw near the close of your life, may the remembrance of the comfort you have bestowed on me be a fund of joy and consolation to your heart! My sweet instructor, my mistress, my guide to the path of salvation, how shall I thank you? Your Sydney too I would thank. How much have I been indebted to his friendly attention! Let me join your hands, that with my dying lips I may bless you both."

While Henry and Harriet knelt in silent sorrow by the side of the bed, endeavouring as much as possible to suppress their feelings, in order to catch every word that fell from Julia, a loud groan was heard from the opposite side of the room. Julia instantly caught the sound. "It is honest Quinten," said she, "let him come near me. Do not, my good Quinten, do not grieve for me thus. God has for me ordered all

things graciously—I rejoice in his decrees. Death has now for me no terrors.”

‘O that I should have lived to see this day!’ sobbed the old soldier. ‘Would to God I could die for thee, my dear young lady! But surely there is yet hope. So young as you are—so very young!’

“Death is no respecter of persons, my good Quinten! you may yet see many younger than me laid in their graves. Return to my poor mother, and continue to be attentive to her. She has been ill; do not wound her by the excess of your sorrow. I know my death will grieve her; but tell her, I beg she would consider it as a blessing.”

‘This is too much!’ cried Quinten, ‘I cannot, cannot stand it.’ Then striking his hand upon his furrowed brow, he turned away to conceal the anguish of his heart. On a slight motion made by Mrs. Fielding he lifted up his eyes, and beheld the lifeless head of Julia sunk upon Maria’s bosom.

A silence, more expressive than the loudest lamentations of clamorous sorrow, closed the solemn scene.

Maria continued still to clasp in her arms the inanimate form of her lovely friend, lovely even in death; and leaning over her, bedewed the pale face with her fast-falling tears. Henry and Harriet still knelt by the bedside, and continued to press the hand whose last office had been uniting theirs. While the old domestic, the venerable Quinten, wringing his hands in silent anguish gazed upon the corpse, and seemed insensible of the tears which coursed each other down his hard and weather-beaten face. Mrs. Fielding, who sat by the bedside, assisting and supporting

supporting Maria, made an effort to speak, but could not. Doctor Orwell was the first who broke the emphatic silence. "It is enough, my children," said he, "all is now over. The solemn scene is now closed—happily closed, I trust in God, for the dead; and useful for us who are of the living, if we have grace *to lay it to heart*."

CONCLUSION.

"Domestic Happiness, thou only bliss.
 "Of paradise that has survived the fall!
 "Though few now taste thee unimpaired and pure;
 "Or tasting, long enjoy thee—too infirm,
 "Or too incautious, to preserve thy sweets
 "Unmixt with drops of bitter, which neglect,
 "Or temper, sheds into thy crystal cup.
 "*Thou art the nurse of virtue.*"

COWPER.

THE serious part of our readers may, perhaps, be of opinion, that with the last chapter our history ought properly to have concluded; as whatever we now can add must tend to destroy the impression it was calculated to produce. It may be so. But how could we have the heart to disappoint the Misses, by closing our narrative without a wedding? A novel without a wedding, is like a tragedy without murder, which no British audience could ever be brought to relish. A wedding, a double wedding, we shall with pleasure and alacrity announce; but from us our fair readers must not expect too much. Willing as we are to oblige them, we cannot possibly contrive to marry every individual of our *dramatis personæ* in the last scene.

"And pray, why not?" exclaims a pretty critic.

critic. "All the young ones at least, you must certainly provide for; it is not always done?"

'Yes,' cries another, 'to be sure it is; and nothing should have tempted me to wade through the book, but to see who Bridgetina was to have at the last. Had I thought she was to have remained unmarried after all, I give you my word I should never have read three pages.'

"Nor I," repeats a third; "and during the half of the last volume, I have been doing nothing in thinking whether Mr. Vallaton or Mr. Myope was to be the happy man. Vallaton is a sad wretch, to be sure; but then he might have been made to reform all at once; nothing is so common; and who, except this stupid author, but would have made him out to be the son of some great Lord?"

"If Bridgetina can't have him," cries the other, 'she surely may have Myope at least. His poverty is no obstacle; for what so easy, as to make him have some rich uncle come home from the East-Indies, or to give him a prize in the lottery; or—oh, there are a thousand ways of giving him a fortune in a moment; and if Bridgetina be not married either to him or Vallaton, I shall be out of all patience.'

"And I," rejoins another fair judge, "shall condemn the book without mercy, if Mrs. Fielding be not married to her old lover Mr. Sydney. It must be so, to be sure. After being in love with each other for thirty years, it would be so romantic! and they must of course be so happy! As for Henry and Harriet, there is nothing interesting in their story. Such matches take place every day. Had they married to live in a cottage upon love, or had they been raised to all the splendour of the high ton, it might have been

been charming either way. But to give them competence in middle life is quite a bore, and shews the author to be a mere quizz. Churchill and Maria, too, are tame creatures. What woman of spirit would put up with being a man's *second love*? When I marry.—”

Stay, dear young lady. Make no rash promises; and till experience have convinced you that romantic passion is the only true foundation for matrimonial felicity, do not condemn the conduct of Maria Sydney. To the observations of your sister critics we shall reply in order, and obviate (as much as it is in our power to obviate) the force of their objections.

First, then, with regard to the disposal of our heroine. We are very sorry to confess that she is still unmarried. But this is far from being our fault; and if you will have the goodness to recollect that she is neither *rich* nor *handsome*, it will cease to appear so very extraordinary. Mr. Vallaton might, it is true, have been reformed for her, as you propose; he might, likewise, for aught we know, have been recognized as the offspring of some noble Lord, had it not unfortunately happened, that before either of these events could take place, a period was put to his existence by the perfidious contrivance of the very woman for whose sake he had robbed and abandoned the unfortunate Julia. This wretched woman, whose principles Vallaton had made it his boast to form, had the art so far to insinuate herself into his affections, as to reign absolute mistress of his heart. His passion for Julia gave but a short-lived interruption to her authority. Though the beauty of Julia excited his admiration, his heart was too depraved to feel the full force of her charms. The delicacy of her pure and uncorrupted mind laid him under a restraint so disagreeable, that

had

had not the power over her fortune been attached to the possession of her person, he would soon have desisted from the pursuit. Nor when success had crowned his arts, did the tender affection of Julia touch his soul. The mind and manners of the profligate Emmeline were so much more congenial to his own, that he found her conversation a relief from the insipid innocence of Julia's; and though in personal attractions there could be no comparison made between them, he preferred to youth, modesty, and beauty, the sophisticated blandishments of a time-worn wanton. So perverse is the taste of sensual depravity! which, in the well-known language of our immortal bard,

" Though to a radiant angel link'd,
" Will prey on garbage."

With a degree of art beyond the conceptions even of the artful Vallaton, did this infamous woman employ the influence she had obtained to his destruction. At her instigation he took Julia to the house from which she so fortunately escaped to Mrs. Fielding's Asylum; and as the wickedness of even the worst of men seldom equals the wickedness of woman, it was by her contrivance that Julia was there robbed of the sum he had intended to leave her for the supply of her immediate exigencies. The plan of their elopement to France was likewise her's, and the execution of it she contrived to accelerate by the introduction of a pretended friend from that kingdom, who appeared as a private agent for the sale of the confiscated estates of the ex-nobles; and who fired the avarice of Vallaton by the description of a seignior which he offered him upon terms so advantageous that it

would

would have been folly to let slip the opportunity of so highly advancing his fortune.

On arriving at Paris, where the purchase was to be completed, some obstacles occurred of which the London agent had not been sufficiently aware; hopes were however given that these might be overcome, and the negotiation was still going forward, when Vallaton was arrested as a spy and agent of the royalists. It was not till after his trial and condemnation that he discovered the name of his accuser, or the nature of the evidence on which he had been condemned. Sharper than the instrument of death was the anguish that pierced him, when made sensible that he had been betrayed by the wretched partner of his guilt. On his way to the scaffold he gave vent to his rage by curses and imprecations, which he continued to pour forth till the last minute drew on. He then paused, and by the expression of his countenance seemed to cast a retrospective glance on the events of his past life. A convulsive groan of horror and despair then burst from his agitated bosom; he started from the grasp of the executioner, but after a short and ineffectual struggle was forced to submit to the fatal blow.

To offer any comment upon the circumstances of this catastrophe would be impertinent. As we do not presume to imagine, far less to take it for granted, that our readers are less capable of reflection than we are ourselves, we shall not trouble them with obvious deductions from the circumstances we relate; but content ourselves with having fully explained the reasons that rendered it impossible for us to gratify our fair readers by making up a match between Mr. Vallaton and our heroine Bridgetina.

Why

Why Mr. Myope did not marry her is, perhaps, not quite so easily solved. He might, indeed, as has very properly been observed, have made an excellent husband for her; but it unfortunately so happened, that having *no* rich uncle coming home from abroad, and having got *no* prize in the lottery; and having moreover become acquainted with a rich widow, (a disciple of Swedenburg's, by whom he was made a convert to the New Jerusalem faith) he sealed his conversion by uniting himself to his instructress; and is now employed in writing a quarto volume to prove the possibility of an intercourse with the world of spirits. He has already had some admirable visions; but Bridgetina, though much inclined to adopt his new opinions, has not yet been so highly favoured. She continues to live with her mother, and notwithstanding the dissimilarity of their pursuits, begins to find that the consciousness of contributing to the happiness of a parent is a *pleasurable sensation*.

As for Mrs. Fielding, we shall in her own words explain to you her reasons for declining an union with Mr. Sydney, when proposed to her by some friends, who knew the length and sincerity of their mutual attachment.

"It is observed by Solomon," said Mrs Fielding, 'that *there a time for all things*,' among the rest '*a time to marry*.' This *time* is surely not in the autumn of life when the habits are formed, and the mind has lost that ductility which renders it capable of yielding to, and even of coalescing with, the humours of its partner. Without solid and mutual esteem, no marriage can be happy. The love that has it not for its basis, is, as Solomon observes of the laughter of fools, '*like the crackling of thorns*;' a blaze that is soon extinguished.

extinguished. But cold esteem is not sufficient. Love too must lend its aid ; and what can be more ridiculous than a Cupid in wrinkles ! No, no, my friends ; I shall not so expose myself. I still feel for Mr. Sydney the most lively affection, but it is not the affection that would now lead me to become his wife. From the day I heard of his marriage, I have devoted myself to a single life. I have endeavoured to create to myself objects of interest that might occupy my attention, and engage my affections. These I have found in the large family of the unfortunate. My plan has been successful in bringing peace to my bosom ; and peace is the happiness of age—it is all the happiness of which on this side the grave I shall be solicitous.”

Such was the decision of Mrs. Fielding, which no intreaty could prevail on her to alter. To our fair readers we shall leave it to pronounce upon its propriety.

In the affectionate and endearing attention of her children (for so she calls Henry Sydney and his wife) she receives as great satisfaction as ever parent experienced. She is a daily witness of their happiness, and perhaps, in the consciousness of having been instrumental in promoting it, experiences a happiness that is little inferior.

Mr. and Mrs. Churchill, (who reside great part of the year in the country) though they could not prevail upon Mr. Sydney to relinquish his house at W——, or give up the paternal care of his little flock, enjoy a great deal of his company, and have the pleasure, by a thousand tender attentions, of increasing his comfort, and augmenting his felicity. In their journeys to town, where Mr. Churchill is obliged to spend
a part

a part of every winter, they have hitherto prevailed on Mr. Sydney to accompany them; and that he may have an additional inducement for continuing to do so, Mr. Churchill has fitted up a small museum of natural history, which it is the old gentleman's delightful business to fill with the choicest specimens. The museum has, however, of late occupied a less share of his attention than formerly. Since the little Maria Churchill has been able to kiss the name of *grand-papa*, and Harry Sydney to climb upon his knee, the beetles and butterflies have been frequently neglected; nor is it a slight gratification to the smiling parents to perceive how much the endearing caresses of his little favourites gain upon his heart.

“Oh speak the joy, ye whom the sudden tear
 “Surprises often, while ye look around,
 “And nothing strikes your eye but sights of bliss,
 “All various nature pressing on the heart;
 “An elegant sufficiency, content,
 “Retirement, rural quiet, friendship, books,
 “Ease, and alternate labour, useful life,
 “Progressive virtue, and approving Heav’n!
 “These are the matchless joys of virtuous love,
 “And thus their moments fly. The seasons, thus
 “As ceaseless round a jarring world they roll,
 “Still find them happy—”

Happy even in “*this corrupt wilderness of human society*,” where any degree of happiness is, in the dark and gloomy dogmas of modern philosophy, represented as impossible. Impossible, however, it never will be found by those who seek for it in the right path of regulated desires, social affections, active benevolence, humility, sincerity, and a lively dependence on the Divine favour and protection.

“What cause for triumph, where such ills abound?
 “What for dejection, where presides a Pow’r
 “Who call’d us into being—to be blest?”

FINIS.

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